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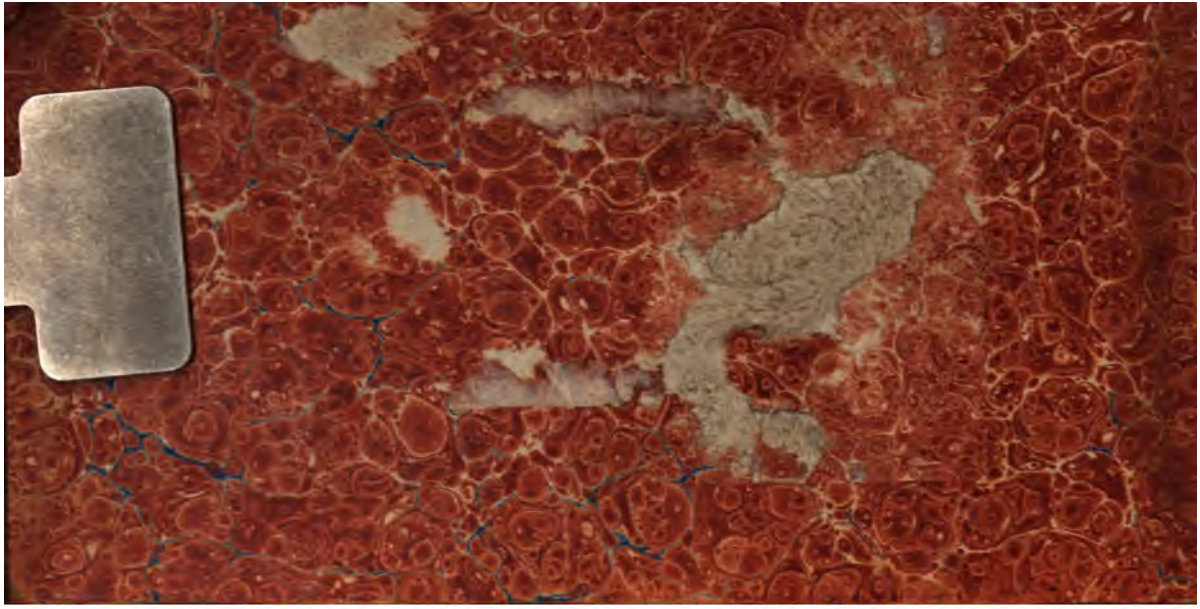
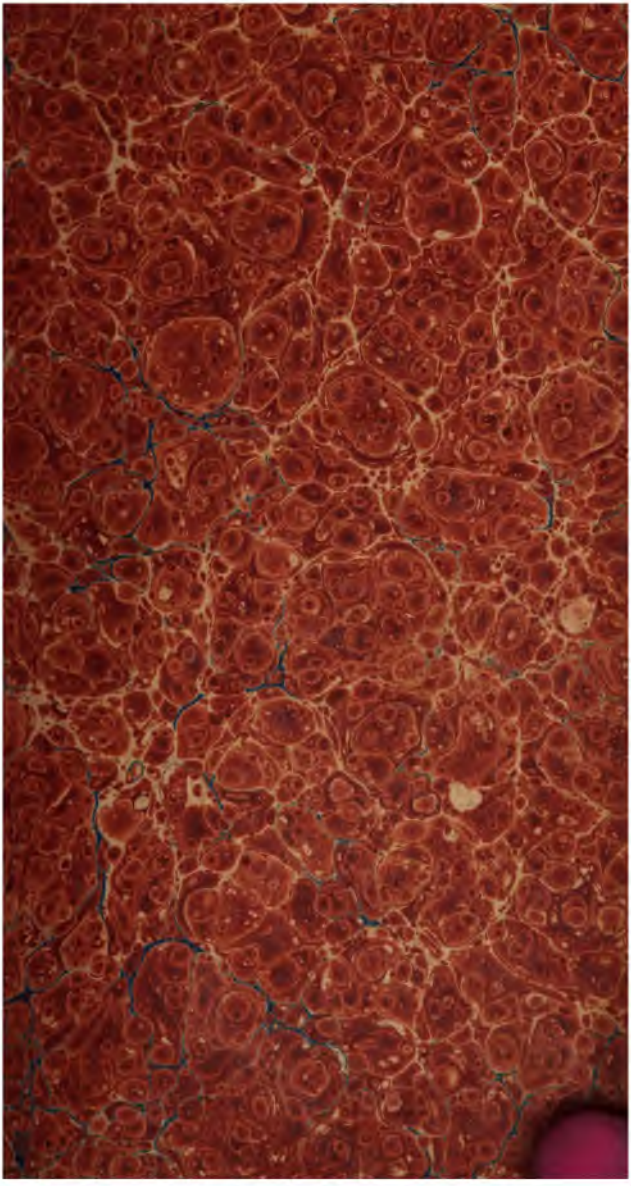
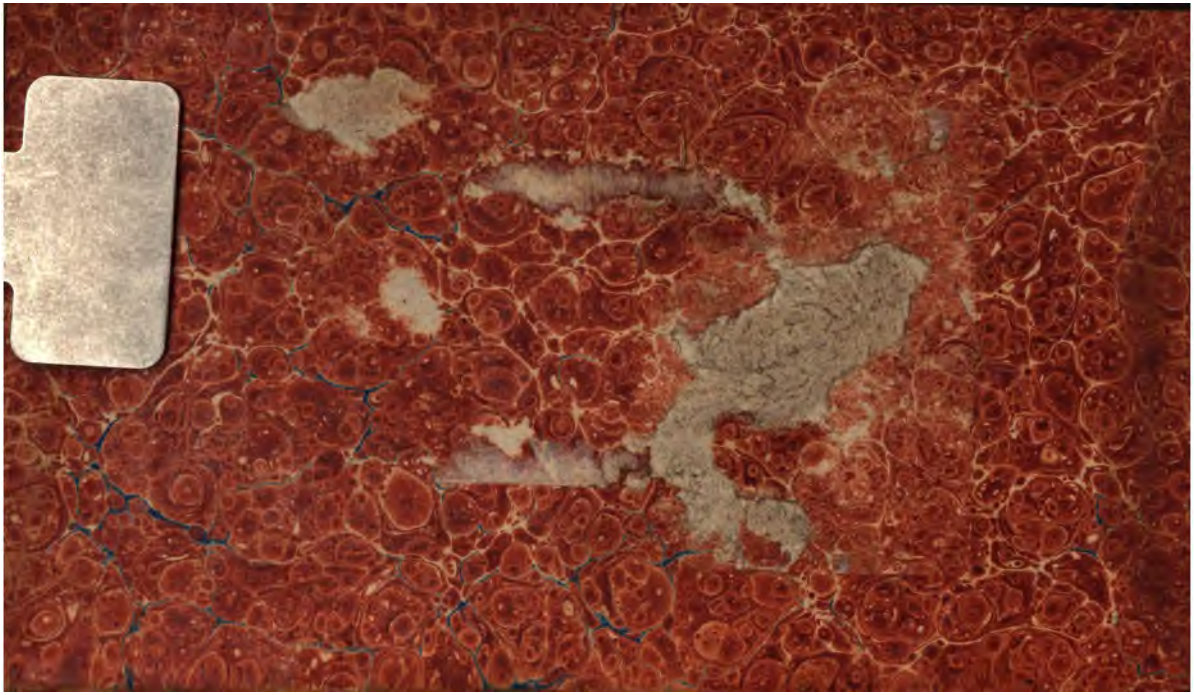
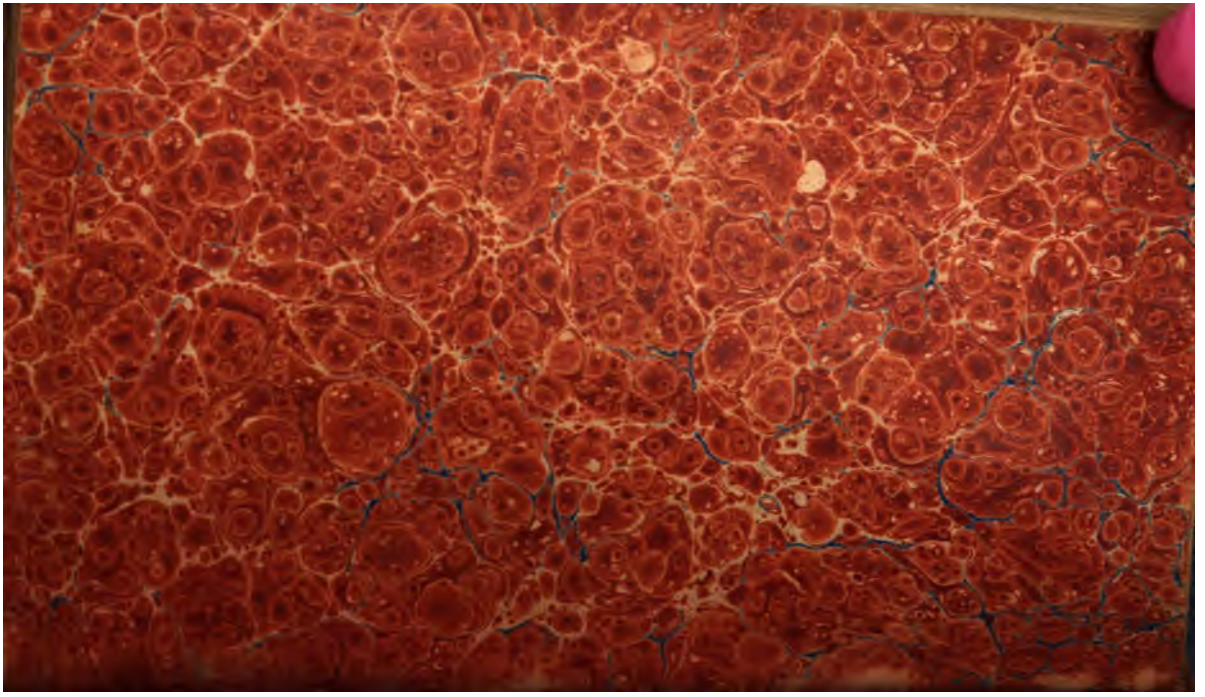








NEW TALES.

BY

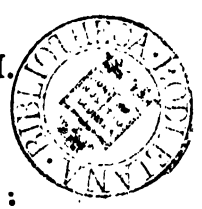
MRS. OPIE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Men pleas'd theirselves, think others will delight
In such like circumstance, with such like sport.
Their copious stories oftentimes begun
End without audience, and are never done.

SHAKSPEARE.

VOL. I.



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NEW TALES.

MRS. ARLINGTON;

OR,

ALL IS NOT GOLD THAT GLITTERS.

"To whom does that house belong?" said Mrs. Derville to a countryman passing by, as she was returning from London to her home in a distant county, accompanied by her daughter Jane a girl of eighteen, Mary Ann a child eight years old, and Lionel Derville her son, a youth just turned of twenty.

"That house belongs to one Madam Arlington," replied the man, "and all that land as far as you can see, and those

the splendid domain; and sunk into silence.

The abode of Mrs. Arlington was indeed in size and grandeur a contrast to that of Mrs. Derville; but in beauty of situation and in real comfort the rectory over which Mrs. Derville presided could bear comparison with any abode whatever, and till hitherto she had always thought so herself. What had so changed her ideas on the subject? A legacy, a journey to London and a six-weeks residence there.

At the age of sixteen Mrs. Derville was an admired beauty in the country circle in which she moved; and her charms both of person and mind, combined with the respectability of her birth and the excellence of her fortune, made an union with her as desirable in point of prudence and ambition as in taste. Amongst many lovers she had two who were a complete contrast to each other in worldly pretensions; for one was infinitely her su-

perior in fortune, and the other as much beneath her. The one had a mansion and estates equal to those of Mrs. Arlington; to the other might be applied the words of the old ballad,

"Wisdom and worth were all he had;"

and Anna Pointz could have added,

"And they were all to me:"

for, consulting nothing but her heart, she gave herself and her wealth to Mr. Derville, who had just entered the church; and when he was old enough to take priest's orders she presented him to a living which was part of her fortune.

And every day convinced Mrs. Derville of the wisdom of her choice, since every day discovered some new virtue in Derville, whenever he appeared in any new situation.

To the fond husband succeeded the affectionate father, and the exemplary teacher to others of those holy precepts

by which his own life was fashioned; and three lovely children had cemented still more the tie of conjugal affection, when a noble relation, who had been too proud to notice Mrs. Derville during her life-time, left her at her death a considerable legacy in money, together with a share of her clothes, furniture, &c., of which share she was to be allowed her choice.

It was therefore requisite for Mrs. Derville to go to London; and it was with an aching heart that Derville assured her he could not accompany her, because he could get no one to perform his parish duties for him during an absence, probably, of many weeks.

He had another reason for giving up all idea of leaving home, which he tenderly and wisely concealed from his wife; not only in order to spare her certain and unnecessary anxiety, but to secure her own and her children's safety. A low and infectious fever had just broken out in the

village, and Derville knew that if his affectionate wife was aware of the circumstance she would either insist on staying to share his duties and his dangers, or she would have gone to London and remained there in a state of constant alarm concerning him and the children whom she had left behind. The necessity of a journey to London therefore was rendered doubly fortunate in Mr. Derville's eyes by this alarming malady; as, by prevailing on his wife to take all her family with her, he should place them all beyond the reach of infection.

He consequently took every possible precaution to keep the knowledge of the fever from his wife; and as it had only as yet shown itself at the extremity of the parish, he succeeded in his attempt; and he contrived to prevent her and the children from paying their accustomed visits to the cottages of the poor, on pretence that all their time would be wanted to prepare for

their journey, which ought, he said, on every account to be undertaken immediately. It was not, however, without sensations of fond agony, which he found it very difficult to conceal, that Derville beheld them thus preparing for a separation which might, he knew, be eternal in this world; and when, after such struggles and such tears as were likely to attend their *first* parting, Derville saw the carriage drive off which conveyed from his sight those he tenderly loved, he experienced pangs which nothing but the conviction that he was doing his duty could have enabled him to endure; for he was conscious that in his necessary attendance on the sick he might imbibe the contagion and sink under its power, "And then," said he, clasping his hands in agony, "I shall never see those dear ones again!"

But there is no trial which a firm reliance on the only support that cannot be taken away will not teach any one to bear

and even to triumph over. "And my wife, my children will be spared, and saved by this journey," he exclaimed; "there is comfort in *that* assurance:" though ever and anon he could not but recollect that on this journey, which he had so eagerly welcomed, dangers might attend, though of a *different nature*, as great as those from which he had successfully endeavoured to guard them.

The travellers reached the metropolis in safety on the third day at noon; and as they had never left home before, except to go to a watering-place in the neighbourhood, the eternal bustle and crowding in the streets of London, which they entered at the city end, had their usual effect on being entered the first time: and while Mrs. Derville, her son, and elder daughter, beheld every thing in a sort of silent wonder, the little girl of eight years old was in one constant ex-

clamation of childish delight. A lodging had been procured for them by the solicitor, who was the executor of Lady Ann Pointz, the lady by whose will Mrs. Derville was so much benefited; and it was taken in the neighbourhood of Cavendish-square, near his own house, as, though his office was in the city, he resided in Edward-street.

Nothing material occurred on the first or second day of their arrival, as Mrs. Derville was not quite well after her journey, and had nothing so much at heart as to write an account of her feelings and those of her children, on the road and on beholding London, to the beloved being whom she had left. And though she felt that she did not come to the metropolis to think only of her husband and to write to him, still while finding herself wholly amongst strangers, and alone in a *crowd*, a feeling forlorn as well as fond impelled

her to turn towards the home which she had quitted, and to seek comfort by recalling it and its master perpetually to her view.

Happy was it for her peace that she did not even suspect the danger to which that beloved being was exposed. She was not to go to the house of death and see the treasures which awaited her there, till Lady Lucy Donellan—who like herself was second-cousin to the deceased, and was to have the half of the clothes and furniture which she left—should be able to accompany her, and she was then confined to her house with a cold. In the mean while Mrs. Derville expected to be able to furnish herself and children with proper mourning before she saw that lady. But Lady Lucy Donellan was so eager to see the things destined for her possession, and also by calling on her co-partner in the legacy to discover whether she could not take advantage of her simplicity, that

early on the third day after their arrival, and at the risk of her health, Lady Lucy drove up to Mrs. Derville's door.

Lady Lucy had not, at that moment, resolved what line of conduct to pursue: she knew not yet whether she should awe the country parson's wife, as she called her, by the repelling dignity of superior rank, and thereby make her compliant to her wishes; or charm her into a desire to oblige her noble associate, by excessive and condescending graciousness. She concluded that neither Mrs. Derville nor her grown-up son and daughter were presentable at her house: still she thought it would be best to invite them to dinner, but ask only some dependents to meet them, to whom she should not be ashamed of showing at her table a gawky awkward milk-maidish, ill-dressed woman, and her still more gawky and ill-favoured offspring.

Nor was this important point decided in her mind, when she got out of the

carriage. Mrs. Derville, who sat in a back room, did not hear the carriage stop; and as the street door stood quite open, she did not discover that the footman's loud knock was at her house; nor indeed could she well attend to any noise at that moment, as she was singing an Italian canon with Lionel and Jane, which had been taught them by a lady whom they had first met at a watering-place, and who had since been a frequent guest at their house. This lady, finding they had each of them fine voices and good ears, had taken the trouble to impart to them much of her own knowledge of singing, and had taught them the rare accomplishment of singing correctly in parts.

Therefore, as Lady Lucy set her foot on the first step of the stairs it was arrested by amazement, for she had heard too much good music not to know that what she now heard was sweet and in tune; and she began to think she had mistaken

the door: but the footman, whom Mrs. Derville had hired for the time they staid in town, assured her it was his ladies and the young gentleman who were singing; and with a respect for the country parson's family, which she never expected to feel, she entered the room.

Mrs. Derville had too much simplicity of character, if not dignity of mind, to be embarrassed by a visit from a woman of quality. She had never felt sufficient respect for mere titles, to be flattered and fluttered into awkwardness on receiving an unexpected call from a noble guest; and to Lady Lucy's increased amazement, Mrs. Derville and her daughter both met her with as much ease, though with a heightened bloom, as if she had been only their equal. But her amazement did not end *there*; for if her ear had been charmed with their voices, her eye was equally so with their personal graces; and even before the first compliments were

over, and Lady Lucy was quietly seated in her chair, she had convinced herself that her new friends were not only *presentable* at her parties, but a desirable *acquisition* to them; and as it was then July, when something new was particularly precious, as the early wonders of the season were ceasing to be wonderful and to attract, Lady Lucy resolved that Mrs. Derville (a beautiful country lady, the near relation and legatee of Lady Ann Pointz, with her lovely and accomplished daughter and her handsome son, who all sung like angels) should be the theme of her praises for the next week, and that at the end of it she would make a party on purpose for them, and to introduce them into the fine world.

For a time, indeed, the interests of her party banished the recollection of the interests of her avarice; but the latter passion soon returned, and she had now at length determined to promote them

by the arts of insinuation, not the power of superiority: indeed, she soon saw that the "*country parson's wife*" was not a woman to be awed into any thing. Accordingly, she used every art of flattery to please, and *succeeded.* Glee succeeded to glee, duet to duet; and that accomplishment which had before been valued chiefly as it charmed a husband's and father's ear, became, from Lady Lucy's praises, only too precious to them as a passport, according to her, into circles which they never expected to enter. The personal beauty of the group was not forgotten: and though she could not exclaim openly concerning the loveliness of the elder part of the family, —though Mrs. Derville, at thirty-seven, looked like her daughter's elder sister, and Jane Derville was very like her still beautiful mother,—Lady Lucy could venture to go into raptures concerning the beauty of the little girl, and then declare she

was the very image of her mother and her sister; "And indeed, so is your son, Mrs. Derville, except that his eyes are dark, and his complexion ruddier, and his look and person *manly*." Here was language for the ears of unsophisticated beings, who, though they knew that they possessed personal beauty, had not learnt to value themselves upon it:—but sweet is the language of flattery; and as they were sincere themselves, they believed in Lady Lucy's sincerity, and thought her praise disinterested. *Sincere* it *certainly* was; and as Lady Lucy knew the effect of *new faces* and *pretty* faces in the London world, she anticipated so much *éclát* to her next select *petit souper* from the introduction of these novelties, that her spirits became quite elevated; and she was so entertaining, that when she left them, the Dervilles were delighted to think they should see her again the next day. The next day she did come,

his affection, as he was fearful that the infection which he had providentially escaped, might not be sufficiently overcome to make their return as yet a matter of safety to themselves. However, the mortification was but for a moment, and the permission was a source of lasting satisfaction, as the week was to be passed in a round of pleasant engagements. It proved also as delightful in reality as it had been in expectation; and there was only one of the family who pined for the country, and did not think London the most delightful place in the world. That person was little Anna, who went to bed when the others went to parties, and who thought the garden in Cavendish-square a bad place to walk in compared to that at her own dear home; and had it not been for the pleasure which the fine shops afforded her, and the sight of the carriages and the crowd, the poor child would have been

miserable during a residence which gave the rest of her family considerable enjoyment.

The last two days of their permitted stay at length arrived, and found them as unwilling to go as ever; and maternal ambition and maternal fondness, added to the personal pleasure which Mrs. Derville herself felt at seeing herself followed and admired in the new world of fashion, made her resolve to desire leave to stay another week.

The truth was, that a nobleman of very pleasing manners and exterior had paid Jane the most marked attention; and his admiration of her was so evident, that, as she found her daughter was strongly prejudiced in his favour, she had little doubt but that he meant to make her an offer of his hand; and that her beauty and her voice would, in the usual phrase, make her fortune, as they had done those of other young women who were neither

so well born nor so highly connected as she was.

It is certain that Jane expected the same thing; and the image of a young curate in the vicinity of Lovelands, who had her father's leave to gain her affections if he could, gradually became fainter and fainter; and the love which had made some progress in her heart before the London journey, was now every day receiving another and another check from the power of ambition. She therefore was very eager to remain longer in London; and her brother was equally so, from the pride and the pleasure which he derived from the great attention paid him by a Sir Mordaunt Williams, a young baronet, who, though they knew it not, was well known on the turf, and remarkable for his profligacy. Urged therefore by their wishes and her own, Mrs. Derville, though not without some feeling of remorseful tenderness and reluctance,

promised her children to write to their father, and beg to stay to the beginning of the second week in August.

The letter was written, but not sent, when the carriage drove up that was to convey them to an assembly at the house of Lady Lucy Donellan,—and thither they went.

As usual, Lord N. (the nobleman mentioned above) stationed himself at the side of Jane; and as he was a man of considerable talents, and of much weight in the circles of high life as well as in the senate, Lady Lucy was flattered to have him at her parties, and was pleased to find the rural beauty had power to attract him constantly to her house.

Young Derville too, as usual, found his new friend in the gay group, who, hanging on his arm, led the flattered youth up and down the suite of rooms.

It was the first time the Dervilles had seen Lady Lucy's elegant rooms thrown

open *en suite;* and the beauty of the apartments, the brilliancy of the lights, and the splendour of the dresses, made this evening, in its commencement, the most gratifying of the sort which she had ever yet passed in London.

Mrs. Derville herself might have had her constant *cecisbeo* if she had been willing to sacrifice principle to vanity; as she was not only the object of admiration to men whom she had never seen before, but the lover whom in early life she had rejected for the sake of love and Derville, was frequently in her society, and took every opportunity of convincing her that in Mrs. Derville he had not forgotten the beautiful Anne Pointz; and as he was now elevated to the dignity of the peerage, his attentions might naturally be supposed by himself to be flattering to her pride, however repugnant it was to her principles to receive them.

But not even gratitude for his pre-

tended persevering attachment, nor the whispers of vanity, had power to gain him more than a smile of civility from the object of his early love. Still there were times when she wished that her lot had been cast in higher scenes than those in which she moved at home, and she would have hailed with joy her husband's elevation in the church. One must forgive her this weakness for the sake of her well-principled rejection of her noble lover's renewal of attention, especially as that attention was so respectful, that a woman less rigidly correct might have thought herself justified in receiving it, as she might have said to herself "It can mean no harm."

But to return to this evening at Lady Lucy's. Mrs. Derville was standing near her daughter, when the ever-attentive Lord N. proposed to her and another young lady to go down into the refreshment-room; and they had nearly reached

the door before Mrs. Derville was aware of their departure. She, however, felt it her duty as a mother to follow them, but the crowd at the door was so great that she was detained some minutes; and in the mean while her parental vanity was gratified, by seeing her truly handsome son leaning on the arm of one of the most admired young men in high life.

But though Lady Lucy had declared that he was reckoned the handsomest young man of the day, Mrs. Derville could not be blind to the superiority of Lionel in personal beauty, though he was his inferior in elegance and air, as the bloom of youth unimpaired by excess was on Lionel's cheek, and the open expression of a heart unconscious of evil beamed on his manly countenance.

At this moment an elderly man near her said to the gentleman next him, "Who is that new victim whom Sir Mordaunt has seized upon?"

"Victim! What do you mean, Sir Thomas?"

"I mean that it is destruction to any young man to be taken notice of and flattered by Sir Mordaunt; for he will inevitably teach him his own vices, and lead him certainly to the gaming-table."

"I fear you are right," was the answer.

"I know I am. But do tell me the name of that poor youth? He looks so good, so innocent, at present, that I wish he did not seem so pleased with his companion."

"He is indeed quite a novice," said the other, "and the son of a lady just come up from the country, who is introduced by Lady Lucy Donellan."

"Poor woman!" cried the good-natured observer. "Is there no one kind enough to put her on her guard, and tell her to prevent any further intimacy between her son and that dan-

gerous young man? From Lady Lucy I *know* such disinterested kindness is not to be expected."

Though this fortunate conversation had passed in a low voice, Mrs. Derville had heard it all, and with feelings not difficult to be imagined: but the last sentence nearly overpowered her; and she could scarcely help turning round and saying, urged by an impulse of grateful emotion, "The poor woman *is* put on her guard now, and God bless you, sir!" But she had power to restrain herself from speaking, though not from turning round; and as she looked on the warning speaker with a glistening eye and a glowing cheek, and with an expression of gratitude which could not be mistaken, he suspected who she was, and on inquiry found that he was right. At first he felt glad at having been unintentionally the means of enabling a parent to save her child from destruction: but he was a man of the

world; and being afraid, by Mrs. Derville's manner, that she had a great mind to introduce herself to him and make some inquiries concerning Sir Mordaunt, which he might get into a difficulty by answering, he took care to remove from her sight as fast as possible; especially as a friend of his had just addressed him, in Mrs. Derville's hearing, by the name of Sir Thomas Waring. It was time then for him to disappear, as Mrs. Derville already knew more than he liked, in knowing that her authority for telling her son—as he concluded she would do—that his elegant friend was a dangerous and unprincipled man, was Sir Thomas Waring. "And really," thought he, "it would be very silly in me to embroil myself with Sir Mordaunt and his family for the sake of persons of whom I know nothing; and after all it is *no business of mine*." So felt, so reasoned the man of the world; and he was seen no more that evening.

In the mean while Mrs. Derville, urged on by the crowd, reached the refreshment-room on the ground-floor, and saw Jane listening delightedly to the conversation of the agreeable Lord N. But being satisfied by having her daughter in her sight, she did not force herself through the crowd to join her, as she saw a vacant place at the table of refreshments; and having asked for a glass of ice, she considered while eating it, what would be the best manner of withdrawing her son from the intimacy to which, she doubted not, a stop must be immediately put. While her thoughts were thus employed, her back was turned to two ladies, who like herself were eating ice; and she heard one of them say to the other, "There, don't you see? there is Lord N. as usual flirting away with that pretty girl."

"Yes, he is always with her now—who is she?"

"She is the daughter of a Mrs. Der-

ville, a relation and legatee of Lady Anne Pointz; but I do not see her in the room to-night."

"That is strange! It is very improper indeed in her to let her daughter go about thus without her."

"Oh! but she is an ignorant country lady, and cannot be supposed to think that any harm can come from the intimacy of a girl in her teens with a married man of fifty. But you and I, who know Lord N., also know that we could not trust the affections of a daughter of ours with a more dangerous man."

Never was surprise greater than that of Mrs. Derville. Lord N. a married man! It could not be! And the ladies having called for more ice, she still lingered near them in hopes they would continue their conversation; and they resumed it thus: "Look, look! how the poor girl blushes, and how pleased she seems! Well, I am glad it is not my daughter, that's all! Really, it

Lord N. were a single man, I should think he was absolutely caught now; but married he is, and will remain so, I can tell him; for I saw Lady N. yesterday, looking as well and as young as when they parted twenty years ago."

"Do not tell him so," replied the other, "if you mean to be in favour with him, and wish him to come to your next party." And then without seeing Mrs. Derville they left the room. Wonder, resentment, and disappointment now triumphed alternately in the mind of Mrs. Derville: but resentment was at length the predominant feeling; for, as Lord N. was married, what could his attentions to her daughter mean? —and how unkind, to say the least, was it in Lady Lucy Donellan, she thought, not to tell her that Lord N. was a married man! "Yet I must own," said she mentally, "Lady Lucy was not likely to suppose I could be so—so foolish as to expect a peer would marry my daughter!"

Thus humbled, offended, mortified, and self-condemned, she paused a moment longer at the table to recover herself; and then making her way up to her daughter, she put her arm in hers, and begged a gentleman whom she knew to call up her carriage. He did so, and Lord N. was reluctantly forced to follow with Jane. When she was in the carriage, Mrs. Derville told the gentleman who had called it up, that she could not go away without her son, and she begged him to go in search of him. He having met him in the hall, and brought him, much against his will, to the safe protection of his mother, they drove off; while with a heart at once agitated yet relieved, oppressed yet grateful, Mrs. Derville sat in perturbed silence by her equally silent children. Her night was nearly a sleepless one; but it was also one of wide decision, for she resolved to leave London the day after the next, especially as Lionel that night had asked her permis-

sion to go with Sir Mordaunt to some fashionable races, and to stay with him a night or two at his hunting-box in the neighbourhood; to which request she had given a decided negative, which her son had received with evident displeasure.

Mrs. Derville rose early, and immediately sent a note to Mr. Farrell her solicitor, to beg to see him in his way to the City that morning; and he came before Jane and Lionel were down. Mrs. Derville immediately asked him whether he knew any thing of Sir Mordaunt Williams: and he gave her such an account of him as fully justified Sir Thomas Waring's fears for her son, and determined her to lose no time in removing him from so pernicious an associate.

She did not think it necessary to ask any questions relative to Lord N.; the fact spoke for itself:—Lord N. was a married man, and yet he had paid her daughter as marked attentions as if he had been

at liberty to pay his serious addresses to her!

When Jane and Lionel made their appearance the latter looked grave, and as if he had a request to urge but had not sufficient courage. Mrs. Derville guessed that it was a renewal of the petition to accompany Sir Mordaunt; and she resolved to put a stop to his hopes by telling him she had burnt the letter to his father which she had written to ask leave to stay longer, and that she was positively determined to leave London *the next day*. "O, I am so glad, mamma!" exclaimed little Mary Ann, "so glad! Then I shall see dear papa again! and Nelly, and my rabbits!"

But Mary Ann was the only glad person present;—her brother and sister were distressed for themselves, and her mother for them. She feared that her daughter's affections were a little entangled by Lord N's assiduities, from her evident emotion;

and she also feared that Sir Mordaunt had already inspired her son with a taste for fashionable life, which might unfit him for his studies at college.

But it was necessary for their good that she should let them know all she had learnt, and from the best authority, relative to the attentive admirer of the one and the flattering friend of the other. And while her maternal heart bled at the idea of the pain which she was going to inflict on those she loved, she could not help reproaching herself for having suffered her maternal ambition to urge her to tolerate an intimacy between her daughter and any man of whom she knew nothing but his agreeable manners and high rank. But though she did not presume to blame Lady Lucy for not having told her that Lord N. was married, as that lady could not have foreseen how far her vanity as a mother would carry her ill-founded hopes;

she did blame her for not having told her that Sir Mordaunt was a dangerous companion for her son.

"Yes, my sweet child," said Mrs. Derville after a pause, in answer to Mary Ann's exclamation; "yes, we shall see dear papa very soon now; and I fear, Mary Ann, that you are the only one of us that can look at him without some self-reproach, for you are the only one that has always been willing and anxious to return to him. I have been a truant to him, but I am so no longer; for I am sick of the depravity and the hollowness of the children of this fashionable world, and I long to be restored to my own innocent home and your dear father."

"Sick of London! sick of this delightful place!" exclaimed both Lionel and Jane at once: "O dear mother! how can you talk so?—And when do you mean to go?"

"To-morrow."

"Tomorrow! Oh, no! not *to-morrow*. Pray, dear mother, do stay till next week."

"Impossible."

"What will Lady Lucy say?" said Jane.

"And what will Lord N. say, Jane?" said Lionel, looking at his sister with a meaning smile.

"And what will your new friend Sir Mordaunt say, whom you make such a fuss about?" replied Jane, blushing as she spoke.

"Mary Ann, my dear," said Mrs. Derville, "go into the next room, shut yourself in, and try to compose a pretty letter to dear papa to tell him we are coming, and how glad you are!" And Mary Ann, delighted at the commission, gladly obeyed, leaving her mother at liberty to make a communication which might have effects that she did not wish her to witness.

"What Sir Mordaunt may say, and

what Lord N. and even Lady Lucy may say, is of no importance to us. The sooner you break off acquaintance with Sir Mordaunt the better for you, dear Lionel. And when I reflect on the marked attention Lord N. pays you, Jane, I am convinced that it is time you should separate."

Both the brother and sister faltered out "What do you mean, dear mother?" and in such evident consternation that Mrs. Derville's voice faltered as she replied, and told Lionel all she had heard, and *how* she had heard it, of his *friend* Sir Mordaunt. The young man listened, and fain would have disbelieved what he heard; but his memory furnished him with so many instances of lax morality in the conversation of his seducing companion, and of his love for play, that he was induced to own at last that the acquaintance so flattering to his vanity might have been fatal to his peace; and silently, but not *very*

unwillingly, he promised to prepare for their departure to-morrow.

"But why," said he at length, seeing that Jane looked disturbed at what her mother had said of Lord N., "*why* do you disapprove Lord N's attentions to Jane, and take her away before she has completed her conquest, and the peer is her own?"

"Nonsense!" cried Jane pleased, though pouting as she said it.

"Nonsense *indeed*," replied Mrs. Derville, "as Lord N. is already a married man, though he is separated from his wife."

"A married man!" cried the indignant Lionel, starting from his seat, while Jane looked pale and motionless as a statue, "a married man! and pay such attention to my sister? Then he is a villain!—But it *can't be*, you must be misinformed."

"Impossible. My informant was a lady who saw Lady N. yesterday morning."

—She then related word for word what she had overheard in the refreshment-room.

"Oh! what shall I do?" exclaimed Jane in great emotion; "Lord N. is coming hither this morning. I can't see him, indeed I cannot—A married man, and be so very particular in his attention to me!" Here a burst of tears relieved her agitated spirits, which the soothing kindness of her mother and her brother soon quieted again; though Lionel, however, nearly overset her again, by declaring that if he saw Lord N. he must affront him. But as his mother *insisted* that he should leave the room as soon as ever he heard him announced, to avoid aught of unpleasant explanation, Jane became composed again: and at length Mrs. Derville succeeded in convincing her that she ought to see Lord N., and show him by the reserve of her manner, that if he flattered himself that his attentions had made an

impression on her heart, his vanity had deceived him; but that, having considered him as a single man, she had not scrupled to admit of attentions which she should now think it unprincipled in her to receive. "I conclude, my child," she added, "that whatever impression his agreeable manners have made on you, that impression must have been instantly effaced by the conviction of his unworthiness;—and a married man who tries to win the affections of an innocent girl, *must* be a being wholly devoid of principle."

"True, very true,—still I had thought, I had hoped——"

"Yes," cried Lionel, "the idea of decking that beauteous brow with a coronet made thee forget much thou should'st have remembered, Jane. Naughty girl! to forget that if you wore a coronet, poor Eustace would wear the willow; aye, and that the willow perhaps would have waved over his early grave."

"Nonsense!" again exclaimed Jane, but in a different tone to that in which she spoke before; for the remembrance of true and virtuous love was sweet to her heart, even though it awakened a feeling of self-reproach, when she recollected how weakly that heart had beaten at hearing flatteries and professions which now she must learn to consider as the breathings of degrading admiration. Mrs. Derville had yet another piece of information to give—and that was the age of Lord N. And when her astonished auditors heard it, Lionel was so amused at the idea of his sister, a girl of eighteen, being doomed to pine in hopeless love for a youth upwards of fifty, that Jane could not help joining in the laugh; and she declared that were Lord N. to be able to offer her his hand she should positively reject it. Thus far all was well. And the mother's heart being lightened of its principal cares by the way in which her chil-

dren had received what she had been forced to impart to them, she proceeded with cheerful alacrity to prepare every thing for her journey.

During the course of the morning Lord N. came, and Mrs. Derville was gratified to see with what propriety of feeling and manner Jane received him. Lord N. immediately saw that something had effected a change in the feelings both of the mother and the daughter towards him,—and he suspected the truth, as he had soon discovered that they were strangers to his real situation, which even those who knew of it frequently forgot, and he also saw that his attentions had awakened ambitious hopes in the hearts of both: he therefore thought himself justified in trifling with the presumptuous hopes of these handsome nobodies, and he knew Lady Lucy Donellan's selfishness too well to fear that she would discover what he wished to conceal; for, so as

she could but attract him to her house, he well knew she would not be delicate as to the means.

While he was thus revolving in his mind who could have told the *rural beauties*, as they were called, that he was a married man—and had convinced himself that they knew it—he resolved not only to make a virtue of necessity, and disclose himself what could be concealed no longer, but to mortify at the same time that pride which now was, on principle, offending his. "And so you are going away to-morrow?" said he in a tone of regret: "I am very sorry to hear it;—and the more so, as I have not been able hitherto to request the honour of seeing you and hearing you at my villa—charming rooms for music, I assure you; and I have a very fine instrument there. My wife, Lady N., is an excellent musician, and she chose it; and when we separated, I

insisted on keeping it. You have heard, probably, of my unfortunate situation?"

Jane was too angry to answer; but Mrs. Derville replied, that she was aware now that he was married, and separated from his lady; but she had not heard of it till the night before: "And then," she added, "as your lordship's manners are entirely those of a *young* (laying an emphasis on that word) and *disengaged* man, I could not believe you were married, and had been so for near *thirty* years, without great difficulty."

He coloured violently at this implied sarcasm, and the more so as he thought he saw a sarcastic smile on the lip of Jane; and piqued in his turn, he observed that he was to be sure quite a boy when he married, and far too young to judge of any thing but external recommendations in the choice which he made;—that Lady N. was young, beautiful, and high-

born, for she was a duke's daughter; and as noble birth was a qualification absolutely necessary, in his opinion, in the woman whom he married, he was happy to find it united to beauty and accomplishments in the Duke of B's heiress; and that these requisites had so blinded him to the defects in Lady N's temper, that when they were married, his surprise equalled his misery.

Both the ladies *understood* the revenge intended in this speech, and wisely resolved to let it pass without an answer. Mrs. Derville therefore changed the subject; and saw, to her great satisfaction, that Jane bore her part as usual in the conversation. But Lord N. felt so provoked, and perhaps so disappointed, spite of his assumed composure, that as soon as Mr. Farrell was announced, he arose and took his leave in a very hurried manner.

Mr. Farrell did not stay long; and he was scarcely gone, after having warmly

approved of Mrs. Derville's projected departure, when a very different visitor arrived, and one who did not, like Mr. Farrell, approve their departure, but who came to prevent it if possible,—for Lady Lucy Donellan entered the room.

"Why, my dearest Mrs. Derville," she exclaimed, seizing her hand, "what is this that I hear? But I declared I could not believe it till I heard it from your own lips. I am told—but it is really incredible—that you are going to run away from us to-morrow morning;—and here have I been projecting such delightful plans for you all next week, and such a sweet little party at my own house to-morrow evening, made *on purpose* for you, and to present you to some charming persons of high rank, the cleverest creatures in the world, who are dying to make your acquaintance!"

"I am much indebted to you, Lady Lucy, for this further proof of your kind

attention," replied Mrs. Derville coolly; "but no consideration can induce me to prolong my stay here another week."

"Well, well, but stay, do stay *over to-morrow*. I *assure* you, I can't do *without* you; and it is a party made on purpose for you and your sweet *warblers*. I have promised the company they should see and hear a nest of the most charming singing-birds—such a lively and tuneful group!"

"It is *impossible*, madam: the singing-birds must henceforth sing in their own *safe woods*, for here they find there are *hawks* only too ready to pounce on their unconscious heads."

"Hawks! hawks! Very pretty and metaphorical, but wholly incomprehensible, I protest! Hawks! I assure you all my guests to-morrow are more like turtle-doves, and prepared to coo out their admiration for the sweet warblers. I assure you there is a young and beautiful heiress who is

coming, and who says such things of *you*, Mr. Derville, as I must not repeat, lest it should make you conceited;—and a certain young baronet declares Miss Derville is a divinity! And I really believe poor Lord N. will destroy himself when he comes and finds my house deprived of its attraction. What will he say or do when he finds that sweet syren gone?"

"Find some other sweet syren as soon as possible, if one there be so lost to propriety as to encourage the marked addresses of a *married man*. Had Miss Derville known Lord N. was married, she would not have so long encouraged attentions which, I am truly concerned to say, have already, I find, exposed both her and her mother to observations of an unpleasant nature."

"And is it possible, my dear creature, that you can be so weak as to mind what jealous envious women say? Lord N's attentions and admiration are quite enough

to make any woman the fashion; and I am quite delighted to see how charmed he was with your sweet Jane, as I knew how it would get her on in the world. And *now* that she is so admired, so sought after, and that I have no doubt of something very great turning up for her; it is quite a cruel, *marâtre* sort of step to take her away. Besides, to give you a little gentle caution; if, as you say, of which I had *no suspicion*, you did not know till now that Lord N. was married, your going off *immediately* on hearing it, will show every body that this delightful Adonis of fifty-odd had gained your daughter's affections, and you thought it better to sound a retreat; besides at the same time telling the world, that, considering your situation in life, you have rather *high* and ambitious views for your daughter."

At first Mrs. Derville was too much agitated to answer this long and artful

address; while Jane sat in trembling silence; and Lionel looked at Lady Lucy, as if he wished she were a man that he might knock her down.

"If, madam," at length replied Mrs. Derville, "my ambition ever betrayed me into wishing to see my child the wife of a nobleman, and that nobleman Lord N., I am quite willing to expose myself, as some expiation of my folly, to the mortifying suspicions and observations which you mention."

"But have you any right to expose your *daughter* to them? answer me that."

"*Jane*, do *you* answer, for I feel assured that you will answer as you ought." And Jane, scarcely able to refrain from tears, replied, "Whatever my mother thinks best to do both for me and for herself, I am convinced is the best thing to be done: and as she thinks it right to go away to-morrow, I am most willing to do so, let the world say what it pleases."

"Mighty obedient indeed! And you, Mr. Derville, are *you* equally willing and obedient as your meek sister? are *you* disposed to break your engagement with that elegant tonish young man, Sir Mordaunt Williams, who has paid *you* more attention than I ever saw him pay any man in my life, and who would have given the very last polish to your manners?"

"No doubt," replied Lionel, with a sarcastic smile, and quite forced over to his mother's side by Lady Lucy's impertinence, as he called it; "no doubt, my manners might have received the last polish; but what does your ladyship think would have become of my *morals*, under such a tutor as we *now* find Sir Mordaunt is capable of being?"

"And pray what have you to say against Sir Mordaunt's morals? He is not worse than other young men, I dare say; and I cannot think what officious person has

has been interfering, to frighten you all away at a moment when your own interest so forcibly requires you to remain here."

"Accident, or I might say Providence, caused me to overhear last night what has produced this change in my plans; and when I have related what that was, Lady Lucy, you will not wonder at my decision." She *did* relate it;—and before Lady Lucy could reply, Mrs. Derville added, "You see therefore, madam, that a *stranger* felt pity for that mother, for whom *you*, a professed friend, felt no pity at all. A stranger wished me to be put on my guard, while *you* carefully concealed my son's danger from me:—And all these circumstances considered, can you wonder that the singing-birds, as I said before, are resolved to warble no longer where they know that there are hawks ready to pounce on them?"

Lady Lucy was now convinced that the

eyes of the anxious mother were too completely opened to be closed again: and since all her hopes were at an end of making the Dervilles of any further service to her, she had no longer any measures to keep with them. She therefore gave way to the natural violence of her temper and meanness of her disposition, and reproached Mrs. Derville, in words almost inarticulate from passion, with the extent of her obligations to her, and with the base ingratitude with which she had returned them; by indirectly accusing her of purposely exposing her daughter to the addresses of a married man, and her son to the corruptions of a profligate companion; but that she was glad she had discovered the *real* nature and character of Mrs. Derville, and had found out, that with much seeming morality and pretence to religion, she had, as was usually the case, a great deal of real rancour, and was very apt to listen to scandal against other people.

"Little did I think," added Lady Lucy, "that an acquaintance which I had been so charmed with was to end in this manner. However, since it *must* be so, I am glad it has terminated so soon, as I shall feel the less; since my *tender* nature is so apt to attach itself, that if a few days more of intimacy had taken place, it would have broken my heart to give you up, as I now do, *for ever*." So saying, she rushed to the door, and was down stairs before the Dervilles had recovered the consternation arising from so many varied feelings as her parting address had awakened in them.

Little Mary Ann, however, who had witnessed the whole scene, was fully mistress of herself; and jumping with joy she exclaimed, "I am glad she is gone! a spiteful old woman!" and then with great power of mimicry she took off Lady Lucy's manner and tones, and gave the greatest part of the concluding sentences with such admirable correctness, that both Lionel and

Jane could not help laughing; though Mrs. Derville, who disliked and had forbidden the exercise of so vile a talent, would have chidden her severely, could she have attended to her sufficiently.

Lady Lucy, meanwhile, had scarcely gotten to the door, when she recollected how foolishly she had acted in quarrelling with these rustics, as they lived near a fashionable watering-place, and it might be very convenient to her to go and spend a few weeks at their house every autumn. She therefore resolved to go back, entreat Mrs. Derville to pardon the irritability of her temper, and the exquisite acuteness of her feelings when the tenderness of her friendship was wounded, and so on: and she was entering the room with her handkerchief ready to put to her eyes to weep out her apology, when she heard and saw Mary Ann mimicking her to the very life; and unable to control her rage at this unexpected proof how

cheaply she was held in the family, she gave the unconscious child a box on the ear, which certainly rivalled if it did not exceed in force that given by Queen Elizabeth to Lord Essex; and having done this, Lady Lucy, ashamed of the exploit, and convinced this had not been the way to get an invitation to Lovelands, ran down stairs again as fast as possible and drove off, resolved to revenge herself on the *rustics*, as she now called them instead of the *rural beauties* and *sweet singing-birds*, by declaring that Mrs. Derville had found out her daughter was desperately in love with Lord N., and had therefore taken her away for fear of consequences—a report which was too flattering to his vanity for Lord N. not to confirm as much as possible.

The Dervilles did not soon recover their surprise at this second visit from Lady Lucy, and her sudden disappearance after having given poor Mary Ann so

painful a memorial of her presence:—she seemed, like a malignant fairy at a birth to which she had not been invited, to have come for the purpose of inflicting pain, and then to have vanished as soon as she had succeeded in her endeavour. But as soon as recollection was restored to them, Mrs. Derville coolly said to Mary Ann, "I am obliged to Lady Lucy for having saved me the pain of correcting an offending child myself; the severity of the blow which she has given you, Mary Ann, is sufficient punishment for your presumption in doing what you know I hate and disapprove, and I trust that the remembrance of this well-deserved chastisement will prevent your ever erring in this manner again."

"No, it would not," sobbed out Mary Ann; "for I would do it again *directly*, though she were to beat me black and blue, on purpose to tease her, but for

fear of vexing you, mamma,—that I am sorry for indeed; but for nothing else."

Mrs. Derville on hearing this rose, and taking Mary Ann by the hand led her into another room, as she never reproved either servant or child before another; and having reasoned with the refractory and impenitent offender, she brought her back again penitent and subdued.

This was the last event in their London life; and as it put a stop to their acquaintance with Lady Lucy Donellan, it was one that might be reckoned fortunate, if not important.

Mrs. Derville saw with a thankful heart the dawning of that day which was to see them on their road from London and its dangers, and light them on their return to the safety and comfort of their home: for the fears of her maternal heart had been so strongly excited both for the peace of her daughter and the morals of her

son, that as yet she was alive to nothing but the dangers of the metropolis, and particularly of the high circle in which she had moved; and its charms were for the time entirely forgotten. But no feeling less strong than that of maternal love could have had such an effect on Mrs. Derville, whose pride and vanity—of which like all human beings she had her share—had been gratified to the utmost during her stay in London; and the only thing wanting to her enjoyment was the presence of her husband; for she never returned from those scenes where she had really shone a rival to her daughter, and had been certainly more noticed, without saying to herself, "I wish Derville had been there to see how much I was admired!"

Still, however, in spite of the flatteries of London, when the boxes were cording, when every bill was paid, the carriage at the door, and the last adieus to her kind

friend the solicitor were spoken,—Mrs. Derville's heart beat with a consciousness of certain relief, and she jumped into the carriage with a degree of alacrity in which she was rivalled by Mary Ann alone. For Miss Derville was not yet reconciled to the surrender of her dreams of offered, if not of *accepted* rank; and she was mortified, probably, that she had no conquests to relate on her return, in order to increase her value in the eyes of one, by whom, however, her value was already sufficiently appreciated. And Lionel was vexed at not being able to see the races of which he had heard so much: and as he had received from Sir Mordaunt a very kind note of regret in return to his of apology, he was much disposed to believe that report had done him injustice, and to wish his mother had not been so firm in her decision.

These reflections led them to proceed some miles on their journey before silence

was at all broken, except by Mary Ann's exclamations of delight at seeing the country again, and having left that disagreeable London. But before they reached the place where they were to sleep, the buoyancy of youthful spirits had returned, and anticipations of home resumed their power over the minds of the young people.

With Mrs. Derville, however, the case was different. As she left London further and further behind her, with all its flatteries, its agreeable idleness, its gaieties, and those comforts (as they were there called), but which Mrs. Derville felt to be luxuries,—she remembered with grateful regrets the pleasures London had afforded her, and the admirers if not the friends which she had left:—while the moral and other dangers which her children had escaped by leaving it, and the moral disgust which she herself had experienced, were forgotten in the pleasing remembrance of the happiness that she had enjoyed there.

True, she tenderly loved her husband,

and was fondly anticipating the pleasure of being re-united to him;—but when the first delight of meeting should subside, she knew that those privations the consequence of a narrow income would appear to her more painful than ever, by the recently acquired ability to contrast her slender store of domestic accommodations with the luxuries which she had witnessed. —She was returning to small rooms, old furniture, and few, if any, of those bedroom or parlour comforts which our ancestors did very well without, but which we have learnt to believe are absolute requisites. She was returning to the regular discharge of such domestic duties as a narrow income made necessary, and which, however disagreeable, she had hitherto cheerfully fulfilled. But life during the last five weeks had opened upon her in a new light;—the mornings had lately awakened her only to the pursuit of pleasure in the crowded street, public drive, or the fashionable promenade;

while the tasteful morning dress was succeeded by the as tasteful evening one. She had learnt to be dissatisfied with the simplicity of her own rural retirement by spending two nights at the villa of a woman of fashion; and she thought with pain of the resumption of household employments, from recollection of the pleasures of elegant idleness in the metropolis. "I wish some one would give Mr. Derville a living of a thousand a year!" was always the burthen of her song after these thoughts had got possession of her mind; and she *sometimes* was tempted to regret that the money which she had expended in London was the only sum which her husband intended should be taken from the legacy that she had just received, as the income of the property was only sufficient, he thought,—and he valued it accordingly,—to enable him to give his son a college education: for the very considerable legacy which Lady

Lucy used to talk of, in order to increase the rustics' weight in society, (as she now called them,) was not much more than four thousand pounds. "However," thought Mrs. Derville, "a small sum will do something towards improving the inside of the rectory at least, and I know Derville will not deny it to me."

These ideas had full possession of her mind when the mansion and grounds of Mrs. Arlington burst upon her view, and called forth the sigh of envy from her bosom. "Just such a place I should like to live in—Of just such a place I might once have been mistress!" she had just said to herself, when she saw the door of the house open, and a servant in a very rich livery appear at it, accompanied by another person whom she concluded to be a gentleman out of livery, and whom, but for her residence in the *beau monde*, she would certainly have taken for a real gentleman. "I should not wonder," said

Mrs. Derville, "if we were to meet Mrs. Arlington or some fine persons coming to her house, as the servants seem expecting some one." She had scarcely spoken, when two outriders in similar liveries appeared in sight, and not far behind them an open barouche drawn by four fine gray horses. In the landau was one lady, whose features were hidden by a veil, and on the barouche-seat a female whom they took for her maid. But though the children made these observations, the postillions drove so rapidly that, though no coward, Mrs. Derville was too much taken up in watching the motions of her own driver to heed any thing else: and her fears proved only too well founded; for just at the narrowest part of the road, as Mrs. Derville's postillion tried in vain to get out of the way of the other carriage, the wheels became entangled; and as the latter carriage was forced along by the speed of the horses, it took off the wheel

of Mrs. Derville's infirm vehicle (a landaulet lent her by a friend and neighbour for the journey). In one instant therefore it was overturned; while Lionel was precipitated into the road, and lay there motionless and stunned with the fall.

Jane and Mary Ann were unhurt; but Mrs. Derville fell against a sharp stone which cut open her temple: but though the blood streamed down her cheek, she heeded it not, as terror for her son engrossed her every faculty; and throwing herself beside him, she gave way to every expression of anxious and suffering tenderness which her quick feelings dictated; while Jane, more mistress of herself, dispatched the postillion on one of the horses to a farm-house for assistance; and the maid-servant held the other, anxiously looking after Mrs. Arlington's carriage as she did so—for a scream which did more honour to her feeling than her self-command, had escaped that lady on seeing

the accident, and Jenny thought it likely that she would send some assistance to them from her house. But she knew not Mrs. Arlington;—it was her custom to give, not send assistance only; and as soon as her postillions could stop the horses, who had run away, Jenny to her great relief saw the carriage driving back, and the lady, who she fancied must be Mrs. Arlington, still in it. In one minute more that lady was by her side; and shortly after, while a tear filled her eye on seeing the senseless state of Lionel, and on hearing the touching lamentations of his mother, Mrs. Arlington was chafing Lionel's temples with *eau de Cologne*, and assisting Jane in examining the head.

But he was only stunned, not wounded, by the fall. In a short time he opened his eyes, and recollection entirely returning, he raised himself up from the ground without assistance. The transition from woe to joy was too much for

his agitated mother; and to the terror of the surrounders she became insensible herself; for not till now had they observed the wound in her temple, and they feared that she had fainted from loss of blood. Mrs. Arlington's outriders and other servants had by this time arrived; and that lady insisted on conveying the whole party to her house while she sent for the nearest assistance: and when Mrs. Derville recovered, she found herself going slowly along in Mrs. Arlington's barouche with her head reclining on Jane's shoulder, her hand in that lady's, while Mary Ann supported by her maid sat in the barouche-seat; and Lionel, holding her other hand, was watching with agitated expectation the moment of returning life.

"Oh! what is all this?" she faltered out at first, "and what does it mean?" But immediately, "I recollect it all now, and you are restored to me!" she exclaimed, bursting into a passionate flood

of tears, and throwing herself on her son's neck.

The first feeling was for Lionel, the next for Mrs. Arlington, whose fine countenance expressed her sympathy with the scene before her, and to whose kindness Mrs. Derville saw that she was at that moment much indebted. But before Mrs. Derville could ask a single question, Mary Ann called out, "O, dear mamma, only think! we are going to that fine house!" and the carriage stopped at the door.

Mrs. Derville was beginning to express regret and other things usually said on such occasions; but she was stopped by Mrs. Arlington, who replied with a benevolent smile, that having done the mischief it was merely her duty to do all she could to repair it; but that, in this instance, she could assure Mrs. Derville it was her pleasure also;—and as her landaulet was so broken that it could not be mended in a day or two at least, she must

beg Mrs. Derville and her family to consider her house as their home till they were able to leave it.

"But can we not procure a post-chaise and go on directly?" said Mrs. Derville.

"A post-chaise can't conveniently hold five persons, though one of them is my little friend there," was the answer: "and if you are expected any where, the post goes out in a few hours, and you can write whatever you choose: besides, remember, you have gone through a great deal, and want rest."

Mrs. Derville bowed her acquiescence; nor did she do it reluctantly: she read the asking eyes of her children—powerful pleaders always at her maternal heart—and she was not sorry herself to be forced into an immediate renewal of the luxuries which she had reluctantly resigned.

The travellers alighted; and while their trunks were bringing from the broken vehicle, Mrs. Arlington begged leave to

conduct them into her own apartments, which consisted of a suite of rooms on the ground-floor opening on the parterre that had so much excited their admiration: but the trunks arrived before they had sufficiently examined the beauties that surrounded them; and their kind hostess, having accompanied them as soon as they had taken some refreshment to the rooms intended for their occupation, left them to change their dress. When the surgeon for whom Mrs. Arlington had sent arrived, he soon convinced Mrs. Derville that her son's fall would be attended by no serious consequences whatever: and he also made her children easy, by assuring them that a very slight application of lint would cure the wound on her temple. As Mrs. Arlington went down stairs, she met Mrs. Derville's servant going to her mistress, and she asked her the name of the lady whom she was so fortunate as to have for her guest; but the name was all

of which the maid's reply informed her—and more she was too delicate to ask. All she knew therefore of her guests was, that their name was Derville; that the mother loved her children and the children their mother, as mother and children should love each other; that they were uncommonly handsome, that their manners showed them to be well-bred, and they were probably well-born: nor was it possible for any woman whose morals were not correct, to have such a countenance and such ease of manner as Mrs. Derville had; and till she could learn more relative to them, Mrs. Arlington was satisfied with what she already knew.

Mrs. Derville, in the mean while, was equally easy with regard to the lady at whose house she had at present found an abode. She had convinced herself that Mrs. Arlington was a widow; and as every thing about her bore an air of uncommon opulence, she fancied that her new friend

had been forced or induced to marry an old man for money, who had in return settled on her his immense possessions. She too was quite satisfied with the evidence of unimpeached respectability so strongly portrayed in the lovely and striking countenance and manner of Mrs. Arlington, who seemed a few years younger than herself; and she could not help being thankful for the accident which had led her to form an acquaintance which might some day or other be of service to her daughter.

While her mother was employed in writing to Mr. Derville, and telling him she only regretted the accident as it lengthened her separation from him, Mary Ann was in an ecstasy of delight; bounding from her mother's to her sister's apartment, now examining the pictures, now looking out of the windows on the lovely view before them, now flying with exultation to the window of the room in which she was to sleep in the

prettiest tent-bed in the world, at the open window of which peeped in branches of the sweetest and handsomest flowers which she had ever seen; for the magnolia in full blow was the one, and the double pomegranate in full bloom was the other. "O mamma, what a happy, enviable woman is Mrs. Arlington!" exclaimed the little girl for the twentieth time: and though she had neither husband nor child apparently, Mrs. Derville's newly awakened taste for grandeur made her think so too. It was now long past Mary Ann's usual hour for dinner; and the poor child was delighted to think she was going to dine in company once more, a treat which she had rarely enjoyed in London; and the sight of her happy face was a real pleasure to the kind heart of Mrs. Arlington.

When the dinner-bell rung, the travellers obeyed the summons, and found a gentleman and a lady with their hostess. The

gentleman was Mrs. Arlington's domestic chaplain; and in the lady Mrs. Derville recognised a Mrs. Hilmore, whom she had seen at Lady Lucy Donellan's, and who, hearing on her arrival that a Mrs. Derville and her family were guests at the Lawn-house (so Mrs. Arlington's seat was called), had made that lady acquainted with Mrs. Derville's whole history as she had heard it from Lady Lucy. —On Mrs. Derville's entrance, Mrs. Arlington smiling said, "I find that Mrs. Hilmore and you, Mrs. Derville, are old acquaintances?"

"By no means," replied the latter: "I have often seen, but was never presented to Mrs. Hilmore." And that lady, looking rather foolish, made an ungracious curtsy and led the way to the dinner-room. The truth was, Mrs. Hilmore's rank in life was not sufficiently decided to allow her to be gracious to those whom

she thought her inferiors; and as she had not any particular point to carry, she saw no reason why she should make the acquaintance of a country clergyman's wife and daughter.

Mrs. Arlington, who knew this lady's character, only smiled as she witnessed her tell-tale hauteur, and resolved to be more marked than ever in her attention to Mrs. Derville; while she heartily rejoiced that as soon as dinner was over Mrs. Hilmore was to set off on a visit to a distance, and had only called at Mrs. Arlington's in her way.

The dinner, which in all respects was worthy of the opulence and elegance of the owner, being at length over, the ladies returned to the drawing-room; and Mrs. Hilmore, unregretted by any one, departed. Mrs. Arlington then proposed a walk round the grounds, which proposal was gladly assented to. As the evening was

sultry, she also proposed a row on the water, and the happy party found a boat and rowers ready at the word of command.

"There is every thing in this sweet place that the most ambitious person could desire," exclaimed Lionel.

"There is all one could possibly wish for, indeed!" said Jane.

"It is an enviable spot, to be sure!" observed Mrs. Derville.

Mrs. Arlington stooped down and gathered a water-lily at this moment, while Mary Ann said, "O mamma, I am so glad we were overturned! it was so lucky for us, as it brought us hither! I am so delighted with all I see!"

"For shame!" cried Jane; "how can you be glad of what made mamma go through so much misery, and put Lionel in such danger? See, mamma looks so pale, I am sure she has not recovered the fright yet."

"No, my child, I have not; but I am

so sure that you and Lionel, as well as Mary Ann, enjoy the unexpected good-luck of being Mrs. Arlington's guests, that I can forgive Mary Ann her little selfishness; though she well knows how often her dear father tells her that she is always to prefer, even in trifles, the good and pleasure of others to her own."

"How well and how forcibly is this important maxim illustrated," replied Mrs. Arlington, "in Miss Edgeworth's Tales! and as a compensation for the punishment which you have inflicted on this young offender, I will find a volume of the incomparable work to which I allude, and with your leave, when we return to the house and candles are brought in, one of our young companions shall read it aloud to us while we work." Mary Ann,—whose head had dropped on her bosom, while a tear filled her eye at the rebuke from her sister and the accusation of selfishness from her mother,—revived at the idea of the

promised treat, and became alive as before to the charms of every thing around her.

The amusement both on land and water being at an end, as the day was fast closing in, they returned to the house in a state of very enviable feelings; to which the only drawback to the travellers was, that Mr. Derville was not a sharer in their pleasure. "This is a sort of pleasure that would have suited your father," said Mrs. Derville; "I never, for his own sake, wished for him at a London assembly."

"I often did," replied Lionel with feeling, "when I saw how much you and Jane were admired, and heard your singing praised; for I was myself so much gratified by the admiration which you excited, that I wished him to share in my pleasure."

Mrs. Derville's eyes filled with tears, and Jane's sparkled at this proof of affectionate feeling in one so dear to them; and Mrs. Arlington turned on him a look of approbation more expressive and more

flattering than any words could have been. "And had *he* no admirers in London?" asked Mrs. Arlington, smiling as she spoke: "he sings, does he not?"

"O dear, yes!" eagerly replied Jane, "quite as well if not better than we do; and I assure you *we* were very proud of *him*."

"I don't doubt it," answered Mrs. Arlington, fixing her large dark eyes with an expression of benevolent pleasure on the face of the happy mother before her; "and sweet is it to witness family affection like yours:—but you must allow me to judge for myself of your vocal powers; therefore, as soon as you have read one of the tales of which we talked, we will adjourn to the music-room."

The tale was read and admired; the writer extolled and envied, whose wisdom was so eminently gifted with the power of making others wise in trifles as well as in great things; or rather, of con-

vincing all who are capable of being convinced, that nothing is a trifle which involves the every-day comfort of a fellow-creature even in the minutest point whatever.

The party then adjourned to the music-room according to Mrs. Arlington's proposal, and Mary Ann was allowed to sit up till ten. The travellers sung most of the trios and duos which they had sung together in London: and while she heard the sweetness of their voices, the perfect tune in which they sang, gazed at the same time on their great beauty, and beheld the unpretending simplicity of their manner, she was not surprised that Lady Lucy Donellan had exhibited them with pride in her fashionable menagerie of human and two-legged animals.

But Mrs. Arlington feared that this taste of the fine world and of its flatteries would make the every-day employments

of retired life comparatively insipid to them; and she was more disposed to pity them for the success which they had met with in the circles of fashion, than to congratulate them on it. "Does Mr. Derville love music?" said she.

"He *delights* in it," was the answer.

"I rejoice to hear it," replied Mrs. Arlington sighing. "That wife is enviable indeed, whose husband takes a pleasure in her accomplishments." And she secretly hoped that Mr. Derville's praises, to a heart as affectionate as Mrs. Derville's seemed to be, might still be sufficient to compensate for the flatteries of the titled and the fashionable.

Her guests were now solicitous to have the pleasure of hearing her, as they concluded from the instruments and music-books (which were considerable in number), that Mrs. Arlington herself was a performer: but she refused to comply with their request, lest she should put an

end to the ease and unembarrassment with which they now sung before her, and that she should therefore lose the pleasure which their singing gave her; as she could not but know that if they heard her perform they would be conscious that they were listening to a very finished singer. Therefore, as she saw their vanity had been much elated by their *petits succès dans le beau monde*, she was too benevolent to wish to mortify it, unless consideration for their good imperiously demanded it;—but she played waltzes and a sonata to them, and they found that she wss a first-rate player. The hour of rest was now arrived; and after the family had been summoned to prayers, the party separated, pleased with each other, and anticipating with satisfaction the return of morning.

Morning came, and the breakfast-room and the breakfast-table exhibited so many

beauties, so many luxuries, and so many conveniences, that poor Mrs. Derville found the Lawn-house more calculated to put her out of conceit with her humble home than any thing which she had seen during her London visit: and Mrs. Arlington's penetration was not slow to discover the frame of mind which the sight of her elegant and complete establishment excited in her guest. "How necessary it is," thought Mrs. Arlington, "for most persons to avoid temptation, for there only the safety of most of us lies!—how few are proof against its seductions! Here is this happy wife and mother become, I see, discontented with her blissful and enviable lot, because she has witnessed a style of living superior to her own,—and which is unable to confer happiness; whereas, if she had staid at home in her peaceful and privileged retirement, she would have remained happy

in the possession which she has, and not have incurred the *vice*, as I may call it, of murmuring at her lot!"

Mrs. Arlington broke from this moralizing reverie just time enough to hear Mrs. Derville say, "I shall really insist on your father's laying out a little money on some furniture and conveniences like these for the table, and so on;—we really have nothing to use but what looks now as if it came out of the ark—and we have no new inventions whatever;"—while Jane and Lionel assented to the absolute necessity of such purchases: and in a short time there was nothing in the room in which they were, which was not to be copied in miniature at Lovelands.

Mrs. Arlington said nothing; but she sighed as she discovered that she was an object of envy to one, whose peculiarly happy fate excited her envy; and when during the course of that day she observed Mrs. Derville's increased dispo-

sition to speak even with petulant dissatisfaction of the paucity of comforts which her home afforded, and to dwell on her resolution to make Mr. Derville do this and buy that,—as if the consciousness that the money came from her made her more resolved to be peremptory in her demands, —Mrs. Arlington wished, if possible, to cure the growing evil before it was too late, and to administer the remedy, however painful it might be to her to apply it; for, spite of the little weaknesses which this London journey had called forth so perceptibly in Mrs. Derville and her elder children, she could not help feeling a generous interest in their fate, and a conviction that they had excellent hearts and good principles; and she was the more convinced of this, when she drew from Mrs. Derville, when alone with her, the reasons of her sudden resolution to leave London, and of her power, while fortified by maternal affection alarmed

for the safety of its objects, to resist the dangerous pleadings of Lady Lucy Donellan.

"This woman's happiness is worth preserving entire," thought she; "and I wish I could save her from the hazard of embittering her own peace and alienating her husband's affections, by petty cavillings and complaints at the meanness and scarcity of such accommodations as, till now, domestic comforts and connubial happiness had prevented her from feeling." Again Mrs. Arlington sunk into a reverie: but as she was alone with Mrs. Derville, politeness compelled her to subdue her inclination to indulge in it; and after complimenting Mrs. Derville very sincerely on her well-principled resolution, general subjects were started, and the arrival of company gave a new turn to their thoughts.

The next day, when the carriage was to have been mended and sent to the

Lawn-house, it was not finished, and could not be ready, the workmen sent word, till the next evening, if then. And Mrs. Derville was again forced to tell Mr. Derville not to expect her; but she assured him that she would set off "the day after the next:" while she *endeavoured* to make herself believe that she was *very sorry* at the delay. When the letter was gone, Mrs. Arlington said that she hoped Mrs. Derville had not fixed any positive time for her return, as she wished to take advantage of the opportunity which chance had given her of making new friends, whom both her taste and her judgement approved; and that she had also the temptation to hold out to them of a musical party, which she was to have in two or three days. Mrs. Derville had not resolution to own that she had fixed a time for her return, as she wished to stay to this party; yet felt, that as her husband would expect her, she

ought to go, and that Mrs. Arlington might think so too: she therefore evaded answering by a "You are very good—very flattering—should like to stay, but ashamed to intrude," and so forth. She then went to tell Jane and Lionel what Mrs. Arlington had said; and they, delighted at the idea of a party, and pleased to show off once more as they had done in London, proposed immediately that they should go and practise against the evening came.—That day was passed as much to their sasisfaction as the two preceding ones, and company was invited to dinner; two of the invited guests were a gentleman of large fortune and his sister; and Jane, whose little heart had learnt to beat with the love and hope of conquest, took care to dress her hair in the mode which Lord N. used to admire; and Lionel asked, as he adjusted his neckcloth at the glass, whether the sister was pretty as well as rich.

"I am glad," said Mrs. Arlington, "that you did not ask whether she was rich as well as pretty. If you had, I should have thought that you had not associated with Sir Mordaunt Williams with impunity, as *he* would so have worded *his* question."

"Do you know Sir Mordaunt?" replied Lionel blushing.

"I know him well, and I also know Lord N.; and I assure you and Miss Derville, that your dear mother never deserved your love and gratitude more than when she resisted the pleadings of my old acquaintance Lady Lucy Donellan, and took you from London."

Both the brother and the sister looked abashed at these words, and wished their mother had not been so communicative: still, there was something in Mrs. Arlington's manner which so strongly invited confidence, that they felt they should themselves have found it difficult to have

concealed from her any thing which she wished to know.

The dinner party passed off pleasantly; though Jane was disappointed of the admiration which she expected, as Colonel Orme, a fashionable man, paid more attention to the handsome mother than the handsome daughter; and on Miss Orme, Lionel's well-tied neckcloth and his handsome person were wholly thrown away; as she was a complete votary of rank and fashion, and a Mr. Derville, a person whom she had never heard of before, could not possibly engage her attention. The case would have been different had Lionel boasted of his intimacy with Sir Mordaunt Williams, Lord N., and so on; for then she would have talked to him with delighted volubility of such "exquisite loves," and have even thought a Mr. Derville "must be somebody, and something charming, to be known by such men;" but the Ormes had left London

before the Dervilles arrived there. An opportunity of exhibiting this trait in her character was afforded Miss Orme at the close of the evening. Mrs. Arlington, though she declined singing herself, pressed her willing guests to perform: and on Jane's being requested to sing a duet with her brother, Lionel said, "Let us sing that duet which Lord N. was so fond of."

These words operated like an electric stroke on Miss Orme; and turning quickly round, she said to Lionel, "Dear me! do you know Lord N?"

"Yes, ma'am," was the laconic reply: for Lionel could not say, "I have that honour."

"Oh! do pray sing his favourite, it must be charming. Is not he quite a *love*?"

Before Lionel could answer so strange a question, Mrs. Arlington replied for him, "Quite a love!—It is a very old love then, and he must be the grandfather of the loves."

"I know you never liked him," returned Miss Orme; "but I dare say this gentleman does, and those ladies."

Again Mrs. Arlington interfered, to the great relief of her guests: "Very likely, for they only knew Lord N. by his reputation for great abilities and his insinuating manners; but you and I, Eliza, know more of him, you know. Yes," she continued; "they know Lord N., and they also know Sir Mordaunt Williams, and other of your *worthies*, and they met them at the house of Lady Lucy Donellan."

"Of Lady Lucy? O dear! now tell me, is she not delightful?" exclaimed Miss Orme.

"Is she not quite a *love*, or the grandmother of the loves?" rejoined Mrs. Arlington laughing.—But a truce with these rapturous questions, and let us hear Lord N's favourite duet."

It was sung, and Miss Orme was in raptures with it; but she took care to add, lest she should be too gracious, that she

should like to hear Miss Stephens and Braham sing it, or Mrs. Salmon and Vaughan, and then it would be perfect.

"I am by no means sure, Sophia, that you would know they were singing it, unless you were told so," said her brother, ashamed of her rudeness; "as you know you have no ear whatever: but I am sure that you never heard this duet so well sung by amateurs before. But now I hope, Mrs. Arlington, we may hear you?"

"No, excuse me," she replied; "my nerves are not strong enough this evening to allow me to sing before Miss Orme; for I should fancy she was thinking how Mrs. Salmon would have sung the song, and I must shrink from such a comparison."

Miss Orme, darting an angry glance at her brother and Mrs. Arlington, was beginning to defend her calumniated ear when their carriage was announced; and after a hurried and ungracious adieu from Miss Orme, and the last fashion-

able bow in perfection from the colonel, the visitors departed; and a feeling of relief seemed to extend itself through the whole party: though Mrs. Arlington was too benevolent to declare that she rejoiced in their departure, and her guests were too conscious of propriety to say it.

The next day one of her servants came in to inform Mrs. Derville that her carriage was mended, and begged to know at what time the next morning she would want post horses. This intelligence threw a visible gloom over the faces of the travellers; and Mrs. Arlington eagerly expressed her hope that Mrs. Derville had made up her mind to stay over the next evening, and to her musical party.

Mrs. Derville hesitated. Again her children looked at her with asking eyes. "It really is so tempting an invitation; —it will be so long before we hear music again," broke from her unreluctant lips; while perhaps in her heart the tempta-

tion lay in the opportunity of making, not of hearing music, and of gratifying her own and her children's newly acquired love of display.

"I would not press you to do what is unpleasant to you," said her kind hostess; "but I shall be sorry to part with you whenever you go; and I think I have such an entertainment to offer you to-morrow, that for your sake and my own I wish to detain you; and as you did not, I understand, tell Mr. Derville to expect you with certainty at any particular time, I feel justified in urging you to stay longer."

Mrs. Derville blushed, and avoided Mrs. Arlington's penetrating glance; for she knew that she had assured Mr. Derville that she should be at home at a particular time: but as Mrs. Arlington did not know that she had done so, and she was desirous to stay, she resolved to write to Mr. Derville by that day's post, and

to oblige herself, her children, and her hostess. She therefore told the servant she should not want the horses till the day after the next: and the pleasures and agreeable occupations of the morning were resumed with fresh alacrity by the gratified Jane and Lionel, though their mother's enjoyment was clouded over by a feeling of self-blame which she could not conquer.

Mary Ann, except on the first day, had always dined by herself at an early hour, but she regularly came in at the dessert. This day, however, she would not stay away till the dishes were set on the table; but she made her appearance before her maid thought it was proper for her to go down; and then instead of stationing herself at Mrs. Arlington's elbow, she hung about her mother's chair in evident discomposure.

"What is the matter, my dear child?"

said Mrs. Derville; "What has happened to vex you?"

"O mamma! Jenny says we are not going away to-morrow."

"Well, my dear, and what then? Are you not very happy here?" replied Mrs. Derville with a heightened colour.

"O, yes—but—but—I want so much to see dear papa!"

"Come hither to me, my sweet child," said Mrs. Arlington kindly; and the child obeyed the summons. "And so you had rather go home to dear papa than stay with me, and go on the water and gather flowers, and play on the lawn?"

"I can gather flowers and play about at home; and there I have Nelly, and my rabbits, and papa too!"

"Though last, not least, I trust," said Mrs. Arlington smiling: "but, my dear, I am going to have company to-

morrow, and fine music; and mamma and your brother and sister wish to stay and hear it, and I wish they should."

"But I shall be in bed, and shall not hear it; and papa will be so disappointed! for he expects us, you know."

"No, I know the contrary: Mamma did not tell him to expect you."

"Indeed but she did though," eagerly replied the little girl; "for I saw the letter.—Did you not, mamma?"

"Yes, I did," answered Mrs. Derville in great confusion; "but I am going to write this evening to say that we shall not arrive till the day after I first mentioned."

An immediate and almost an appalling change took place in the fine countenance of Mrs. Arlington; and after a pause she said, "Then Mr. Derville is expecting you at a fixed time, is he? Poor man! Had I known that, I cer-

tainly should not have urged you to stay here."

She said no more. But in spite of her habitual courtesy it was evident to her guests that she was considerably disconcerted, and that while she fondly caressed Mary Ann, her eyes avoided theirs. The ice, the fruit, the cakes, and some sweet wine, soon banished from Mary Ann's mind, for the present, the sense of her disappointment, and the child became the only talkative person of the party.

"I do not think," she observed to Mrs. Arlington, "that you have any dog as handsome as mine. I wonder whether she will know me! I dare say the rabbits will not."

"If they do not, they will be very glad to see you, however, if you give them cabbage-leaves," replied Mrs. Arlington: "and there is one person who will

certainly know you—and that is dear papa."

"O yes—that he will—though mamma says I am much grown."

"But not altered," answered Mrs. Arlington: "a London journey has made no change in you."

A sigh from Mrs. Derville showed that she took this observation to herself; and as her heart told her that it applied in a degree, she felt something like resentment against the observer.

Mrs. Arlington rose soon after, and the ladies adjourned to the drawing-room; and for the first time they found it difficult to find conversation. Lionel too for the first time felt reluctant to join them there.

He saw the effect which Mary Ann's artless communications had had on Mrs. Arlington; and he was nearly equally averse to blame his beloved mother, and his till now most kind and smiling hostess.

He conquered his feelings, however, and joined the party, to resume his delightful task of reading aloud one of Miss Edgeworth's tales, while the ladies worked;—and while listening to moral truths told in the most impressive manner, Mrs. Arlington's ruffled brow became a little smoothed.

But it was only a little. She had an exquisite sense of moral beauty; and it was the apparent attachment of Mrs. Derville to her husband and her children which had interested her so strongly in her favour, and added power to the loveliness of her person, and the graceful simplicity of her manners.

It was the happy wife, conscious of her own happiness and loving exclusively the cause of it, who had endeared herself to Mrs. Arlington; and now that she found the allurements of amusement, and the temptations perhaps of vanity, could lead this enviable wife to disap-

point her expecting husband, and even cheerfully to consent to prolong an already long separation from him, that moral sense was so painfully wounded, and Mrs. Derville became so lowered in her opinion, that even if she had desired to do so, she could not have concealed her disappointment. Besides, though she acquitted Mrs. Derville of lying, she did not of disingenuousness. She had taken it for granted, untold, that Mrs. Derville did not tell her husband to expect her on a particular day: but then, though Mrs. Derville saw she was in an error, she did not rectify her mistake; and wherefore did she not? From a consciousness that she was not acting quite right towards this admirable husband.

After tea, as usual, they adjourned to the music-room, and the travellers endeavoured to sing—but their spirits were depressed; and though they sung, it was

evident that they had rather not. They now again asked Mrs. Arlington, who had played to them both on the harp and piano-forte in a very masterly style, to favour them with a song also: but this, for reasons stated above, she had hitherto declined; and her guests imagined that she did so, because conscious that her talent for singing was considerably inferior to her talent for playing.

But now, so far from wishing to spare them any feeling of alarm or mortification for their sakes, she wished rather to inflict it; and at least to convince them that this party, for which they had been so willing to defer the pleasure of returning home, and to disappoint the heart that loved them, was one in which their talents would not be wanted, and that they would have been more glad to listen at it, than to perform. Accordingly she sat down to the piano-forte, and sung one of

the finest and most difficult songs of Mozart in the style of a professor, while her voice, at once rich in tone and of great compass, appeared to them the finest they had ever heard; and they looked at each other with wonder not unmixed with consternation: nor, when she had done, could they find words to thank her. She next sung at their request one of Handel's songs, and in a style of equal though different excellence. Again they pressed her, and she sung a cavatina of Paesiello's, which she accompanied on the harp. A simple ballad succeeded, of which the words and air were her own composition:—the words were as follows—

SONG.

To love thee was the easiest task
  Affection ever taught me;
But now I'm forced with smiles to mask
  The woe that task has wrought me.

I saw thee fond, and thought thee true,
And swiftly flew my hours;
But oh! I wove a wreath of rue,
Which I mistook for flowers.

Then go! deceiver, haste away!
To me be lost for ever,
Since I am doom'd to hail the day
That shall our fortunes sever.

Yes, go! nor let me see again
That smile—love's treacherous token;
Lest I once more resume my chain,
And this poor heart be broken.

"How could you, my dear madam," said Mrs. Derville at last, "allow us to expose ourselves before you as we have done?"

"If I had thought that you exposed yourselves, I would not have suffered you to do it, as I have no pleasure in seeing persons degrade themselves. You have sweet voices, good expression; you sing in perfect tune, and I had great pleasure

in hearing you; nor can I doubt that if you had had such instructions as I have been able to procure, you would have sung as well as I do."

"But why have you deprived us so long of the pleasure and improvement of hearing you?"

"Oh! I had my private reasons; and now, if you please, you must sing to me."

"Oh, no—not after you—we can never now sing before you again."

"There, now you see the reason why I did not sing before. I knew that a mixture of vanity and humility would deprive me of the satisfaction of hearing you, and therefore I would not sing.—But come, let us finish with the last chorus in *La Clemenza di Tito*, and I will take the solo parts. I will not ask Lionel to sing 'Ah! perdonna!' with me, for I know he would be too much alarmed to do it; but he shall hear me sing it with a first-rate gentleman singer

to-morrow, and I expect some fine professional singers also."

The perturbed amateurs blundered through the chorus; and no longer anticipating the musical party with very vehement satisfaction, as soon as prayers were over, they wished their hostess good night, and retired to their rooms.

When there, the complicated feelings of Mrs. Derville vented themselves in tears. She had lowered herself in Mrs. Arlington's esteem, and perhaps in her own—and she had probably wounded the heart of her husband—and all for what? For an amusement which probably would be productive both to her and her children of more pain than pleasure. True she should delight to hear such fine singing and such fine music, and to see Mrs. Arlington's splendid rooms lighted up and filled with company; but the dread of being asked to perform herself would damp her enjoyment the whole evening,

and it would be nearly as painful to her to refuse the request of Mrs. Arlington as to comply. And had she been true to the whispers of affection—true to the just claims of her husband; instead of undergoing this week but real distress, she would have been at that moment within less than half a day's journey of home, and the husband whom, spite of her inconsistency of conduct, she loved with the tenderest affection.

Many, bitter—but salutary—were the tears which Mrs. Derville shed that night, and the prayers of a thankful were mixed with those of a contrite spirit.

The next morning she arose very early, and went into the apartments of both her son and daughter before they were up; and after she had unburthened her mind to them, she went down to breakfast, and met Mrs. Arlington's altered eye—for spite of herself altered it was,—with a firm and cheerful glance.

Breakfast had not been long begun

when one of the servants came in and told Mrs. Derville that the horses would be at the door in two hours.

"Horses! what does this mean?" cried Mrs. Arlington.

"That we are going to-day," calmly replied Mrs. Derville. "Nay, my dear madam," continued she, seeing Mrs. Arlington was going to speak, "I am sure, though you are surprised, you are pleased, for I know you think it my duty to go."

"I do," frankly replied Mrs. Arlington; "and I *am* pleased, though selfishly I hate to part with you: but when I think of what a being you are returning to—a loved and loving husband—and the safe happiness of a wedded and retired home, then I can only envy you your privileged lot, and bid God speed you on your way!"

As she said this, Mrs. Arlington affectionately grasped Mrs. Derville's hand, while every trace of coldness had vanish-

ed from her eye and from her manner, and then turning to the window she burst into tears.

Having soon reseated herself, she said smilingly through her tears, "I trust this is not our last breakfast together."

"I hope not—earnestly hope not," said Mrs. Derville with great emotion: and Jane, who sat next to Mrs. Arlington, echoed her mother's words, and leaned her head fondly on her shoulder.

"Perhaps you will come and see us one day?" said Lionel; "only we have nothing to tempt you."

"Do you reckon yourselves as nothing; and the sight of that rare thing domestic happiness?"

"Do pray come," said Mary Ann, hanging round her neck, "and I will give you Nelly, if you wish it. But, no; she would not like that perhaps; so I will bring up one of her puppies for you."

"Thank you, dear child. So Nelly, whom I always concluded to be your nurse, turns out to be only a favourite bitch—But pray how came she to be called Nelly?"

"You will be shocked to hear," replied Mrs. Derville, "that Nelly is the abbreviation of the high and most respected name of *Cornelia*—Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, a great favourite with my children."

"Alas! poor Cornelia!—Little indeed could I have expected to find aught of a Roman matron in Nelly, a pet dog. It reminds me of what Pope says, in his Epistle on Medals, on Rome—

'And all her triumphs sink into a coin.'

"But come, Mrs. Derville, while these young persons are preparing for their departure, let us have a *tête-à-tête* stroll together over the grounds." And taking her arm, Mrs. Arlington led Mrs. Der-

ville to a favourite walk along the banks of the river. They were soon engrossed in very interesting conversation; for Mrs. Arlington, from some view of her own, wished to learn the future destination of Lionel; and as openness on one subject leads to similar openness on another, Mrs. Derville had told her questioner that Jane had a lover, a young clergyman, with a good living in prospect; but she added that she must confess Jane had been so much admired in London, that she wished her not to be in a hurry to form so very moderate a marriage for a young woman of her person and connexions.

"Is her lover well-principled, well-educated, amiable, and fine-tempered?" asked Mrs. Arlington eagerly.

"O yes! and very good-looking too, and very clever."

"And are you sure he loves your daughter with a *real* passion?"

"O yes! and he has loved her from childhood."

"My dear Mrs. Derville," said Mrs. Arlington with almost solemn earnestness, "then let me conjure you not to be so fatally blind to your daughter's true welfare and happiness, as to wish for a moment to retard a union like this, when the lover is old enough to take the living designed for him, from the hope of her forming a higher connexion. Are you not happy in *your* station? and have you ever repented that in the pride of your youth and your beauty, and of your fortune too, you preferred Mr. Derville to his opulent rival?"

"*Never;* for my lot has been blessed beyond that of women in general."

"And why may not your daughter's be so too? Why show—where your child is concerned—the weak ambition which in your own case you so properly scorned? Oh! I have this subject much at

heart. But I see that in your thick dress the heat of the day oppresses you: let us get into the boat, and then we can pass ourselves over to that shady seat on the opposite bank; for unfortunately there is not one of the servants or gardeners within call or even in sight, an unusual circumstance."

"Let me take the oars then," said Mrs. Derville, jumping into the boat; "as I dare say I am more used to row than you." And as she spoke, Mrs. Arlington prepared to follow her; but before Mrs. Derville's hand reached hers, to assist her into the boat, Mrs. Arlington's foot slipped, and she fell headlong into the river—and at the deepest part. For an instant, terror nearly deprived Mrs. Derville of recollection; but when she saw Mrs. Arlington rise again, her presence of mind returned, and she conjured her not to attempt to get into the boat, but desired her to cling to its stern; then,

recollecting that she had observed the water was shallow where she had stopped to examine an aquatic plant, she made for this place as fast as her strength would allow, still urging Mrs. Arlington, whom fear had nearly deprived of her senses, to keep her hold. It was a time of terrible suspense to Mrs. Derville, till she saw by the well-remembered flowers that she was drawing near the shallow water: but before she could reach it, Mrs. Arlington loosed her hold, and sunk again. By this time however Mrs. Derville had reached the place of comparative safety; and having jumped out of the boat on the bank, she waded into the river, seized the insensible Mrs. Arlington by her long hair, which now floated on the stream, and, certainly at some risk to herself, dragged her to the sloping bank, where half her person lay out of the water: but to extricate her friend entirely was beyond her power, nor dared she leave her an instant

lest she should fall into the river again. She could therefore do nothing but scream violently for assistance; and in a few moments Lionel, who was on his way in search of them, appeared in sight, and hastened to her assistance, while servants soon after came running in all directions; but were at first too terrified and too wretched to be able to act at sight of their lady lying apparently dead on the grass, where Lionel had placed her. But on Mrs. Derville's assurance that there had not been time for the water which she had swallowed to have proved fatal, and that she had probably only fainted from exhaustion and alarm, they assisted in bearing her to the house; where in a few minutes the usual remedies restored her. Her first inquiry was for Mrs. Derville, into whose arms she threw herself, with a look more eloquent than words, and sobbed for some moments, with grateful tenderness, on her bosom.

"This lady's presence of mind and exertions saved my life," said she to those around her; "but for her I should never have opened my eyes again."

Lionel and Jane felt and looked delighted at hearing this; and Mrs. Derville, who would have spoken, was choked into silence by the various "God-bless-you-ma'ams" which met her ears on every side—some murmured out, some sobbed out, and some audibly pronounced, from the anxious and grateful domestics; who now, however, as well as Mrs. Derville, insisted on Mrs. Arlington's sending for advice, and going instantly into a warm bed, a precaution which Mrs. Derville herself also consented to do, as she too was wet through, and was now beginning to shake in every limb, from strong emotion, and the painful chilliness which it induces.

But though *she* patiently submitted to be undressed and to go to bed, and take some hot wine and spices, Mrs.

Derville could not attempt to sleep, or even to lie quiet; and after she had returned thanks, heartfelt thanks, for having been made the instrument of saving a fellow-creature's life—and such a being too—she insisted on seeing Lionel and Jane; having resolved to persist in going away as soon after the appointed hour as circumstances would permit, unless Mrs. Arlington should be seriously ill in consequence of her accident: and after lying an hour she arose, being more refreshed by the information that Mrs. Arlington was declared by the surgeon, who had just left her, to be no sufferer in any way from what had passed —than by any cordial which could have been administered to her.

And it was fortunate indeed for her that both her friend and herself were so well; for the letters were now brought in; as, had it not been so, their contents

would have been even more distressing than she now found them.

One was from Mr. Derville, and one from a friend of his. She read her husband's first. It was short, but very affectionate; and expressed his willingness to bear her prolonged absence as long as she felt happy to remain where she was: and she almost wished she had not ordered the horses. But when she read the letter of his friend, her agitation and her tears were so great as to alarm her children; and having just been informed that Mrs. Arlington wished to see her, she went to her bedside, gave her the letter, and ran out of the room.

Derville, on a principle of generous and considerate affection, had not told his wife of the fever in the village, even after it had entirely subsided; as he thought that if it did not hasten her home, it might still cloud over her pleasure

with some fond though ill-founded fears for him: therefore, though he really wanted a little nursing after the fatigues which he had undergone, he resolved to say nothing to abridge his beloved wife and children of the term of their promised enjoyment.

But his friend and neighbour Mr. Travers, who saw he looked ill, was not so forbearing; and he not only in his letter wished Mrs. Derville to return as soon as she could, but, giving way to his feelings of admiration for her exemplary husband, he told her the reason why he had urged her sudden departure with all her children for the metropolis; why he had urged her to prolong her stay there; and expatiated largely on the admirable and efficacious manner in which, while she was enjoying the pleasures of a town life, he was performing to the utmost the duties of a Christian minister to his sick and suffering parishioners.

As Mrs. Arlington finished this letter, (which she read in broken accents to the weeping Jane, while Lionel, choked with emotion which the pride of manhood made him desirous to conceal, had been listening to his agitated mother's account of the same intelligence,) Mrs. Derville re-entered the room; and seeing Mrs. Arlington was greatly affected, she exclaimed in an agony of tears,

"Only think! I might have lost him! If he had caught the infection, he might....." Tears choked her utterance. "But he did not catch it, and he has been spared in mercy for the good of others. Admirable, disinterested man!"

"I would go," added Mrs. Arlington forcing a smile, "barefooted on a pilgrimage to Lovelands, only to look at him!"

"And I....*I* did not make it my first pleasure to return to him! But thank

Heaven I had fixed to go before this letter came!"

Mrs. Arlington pressed her hand tenderly, and said, "I congratulate you on having done so."

"But surely," resumed Mrs. Derville, "you must think it was not right in him to keep me in such entire ignorance of what was going on? He might have given me my choice of going or staying."

"No, he has acted in the best possible manner; and you are, I tell you, the most enviable of women! Utter not a word against my hero, another good bishop of Marseilles, as he appears to me. —But are you ready to go? For though I shall miss you greatly, I am now quite anxious for your departure."

They instantly left the room to prepare for the arrival of the carriage: and Mrs. Arlington rose in order to write a letter to Mr. Derville, exhorting him, if change of air was recommended to him, to come

to the Lawn-house, and give her the pleasure of knowing a man who more than realized her ideas of what a husband, a father, and a Christian teacher should be. She then, with all the simple and short pathos of true feeling, gave him an account of her obligations to his wife, whom she justly called her preserver, and who was consequently entitled to her eternal gratitude.

The carriage came to the door at last, though now not fast enough for the impatience of Mrs. Derville. But to what a revolution of feeling, and what new emotions and sentiments had the changes of a few hours now given birth! Before, the obligation was all on Mrs. Derville's side; now, Mrs. Arlington was the obliged person, and had received from her a service to which most others are weak.

"I am not a woman of many words," said Mrs. Arlington in faltering accents; "but I will prove my gratitude to you

by my actions. I will do for you what I would on no consideration have done for any one else—In time I will explain myself."

Mrs. Derville's heart was too full to speak; and the new friends parted in silence and in tears: but Jane returned to repeat, for the tenth time, their united entreaties that Mrs. Arlington would write every day, to say how she was.

How much easier is it to act well in difficult and strongly exciting circumstances, than to fulfil correctly the quiet and nameless duties of every-day life! No consideration could have induced Mrs. Derville to have left the side of her husband during his perilous visits to the chambers of disease and death; and had she heard of his dangers, while in the midst of London dissipation, she would have flown to him on the first whisper of alarm. But the more easy and more humble virtue of resigning an evening of

projected pleasure and the triumphs of vanity, in order to be restored to him one day sooner, and prove her undecayed affection by a little sacrifice—one of those little and habitual sacrifices which prove affection, even more than great ones do, because no fame, no praise attends on the performance of them:—to this she had proved herself unequal; nor could she tear herself away from the fascinations of London, till she feared for the peace of one child, and for the morals of the other.

But in the latter case the danger was too strongly marked not to be avoided directly, and the duty too evident not to be instantly performed; while the other was a more remote duty, and the danger attending on its non-performance more imperceptible and more gradual. When one meets a chimney-sweep in a narrow path, one takes care to avoid the certain and obvious contamination of his

touch; but we are not conscious of the more gradual and imperceptible, but as certain, destruction of the purity of our garments from dust and the common effects of constant wear.

The travellers, who did not stop on the road, got on rapidly till the evening began to close in; and then they were forced to stop one stage before they meant to do so, by the impossibility of getting horses to go on with. But luckily they at this moment saw one of Derville's parishioners who was returning home on horseback; and as Mrs. Derville's last letter had told him not to expect her the next day, she was very glad to be able to send him word that she was within a few hours drive of home.

The next morning she was still detained for want of horses; and it was evening before the hills that formed the vale of Lovelands, the small lake which sparkles in its bosom, and the velvet

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While the travellers were enjoying the refreshment of tea after their journey, Mrs. Derville, in answer to her husband's question of "But, who is Mrs. Arlington?" put her letter to him in his hand, saying, "Mrs. Arlington is an angel!" And Mr. Derville read with no inconsiderable emotion the eulogy on his wife, and the account of the service she had received from her.

"Then it is really so, is it, and you *did* save her life? Mary Ann told me just now that Mrs. Arlington fell into the water, and she verily believed but for you she would have been drowned: but I really thought the dear child spoke probably from the exaggerated accounts of the servants, as she did not see the scene."

"Oh no, indeed, father," cried Lionel and Jane, eager to do honour to their mother, and to do her the justice she deserved; "My mother's presence of mind did

indeed save her life: and when she recovered, it was the first thing Mrs. Arlington said to her servants—'Take notice, this lady saved my life.'"

Derville looked at his eager and affectionate children with a glistening and approving eye, and then bestowed most eloquent and gratifying praise on his wife, and earnest congratulations on the result of her self-possession; forgetting wholly, that if she from a simple exertion of presence of mind was so worthy of such tender encomiums, and deserving as Mrs. Arlington said of her eternal gratitude, how great, how ardent, and how extensive must be the praises which he deserved, and how eternal ought to be the gratitude, to which *he* had a claim, from the many poor and humble individuals whom his care and his bounties had been the visible means of saving from the grave;—saved, too, by the perpetual recurrence of personal danger

to himself! But Derville, though ever alive to merit in others, never thought of his own; and simply because his actions were never prompted by the wish to deserve the applause of man: he acted on a higher principle and a nobler ambition; and really, while he admired his wife's meritorious presence of mind and resolute exertions to preserve Mrs. Arlington, he was not conscious that, though there was more of *éclat*, and of stage effect, in what *she* had done,—his life for a succession of days had been marked by efforts more trying, more painful, and more virtuous, and followed by results full as worthy of congratulations such as he was now bestowing on Mrs. Derville.

How happily and how rapidly flew that evening!—how impossible was it for Mrs. Derville to regret London, or even the Lawn-house and its conveniences! But the next day when Mrs. Derville sat

down to dinner she could not help saying, "I cannot bear that plain queen's ware, I must get a set of the blue china." And when she desired the maid servant who waited to change her plate, she observed that " it seemed so strange to be waited on at table by a female servant, as she had been so long used to footmen."

"True," said Derville, "you kept a footman in London, and occasionally had horses to the carriage. That was really living in some sort of style, and as you would always have lived, had not Anna Pointz, been a pretty idiot, and preferred the gratifications of love to those of ambition."

This allusion to past seasons was well timed; it dissipated the returning wish for style beyond her reach; and looking on her husband with eyes that did justice to her feelings, she replied, "*Anna Derville* has never yet repented, nor ever can, the choice of Anna Pointz. No, Mr. Der-

yille, whatever else may have been my weaknesses, I have never had a vision of grandeur unshared with you!" And while she spoke, tears filled her eyes, and her voice faltered with emotion.—Derville was surprised, and he might have quoted the French proverb, *Qui s'excuse, s'accuse.*

"My dearest love," said he, "I never suspected you *had* imagined any happiness independent of me as a sharer in it, and I never suspected or accused you of any weaknesses."

"Oh no, that I am sure you never did," said the self-upbraided wife: "yet weak I have been, very weak:—but I will tell you all."

Derville was confounded; and he looked at his children, as if to remind his wife of their presence; yet he felt assured that the weakness could not be much which she was so willing to own before such witnesses. "Well, my dear, well," said he, after a pause; "if it will be any

relief to your mind to confess to me, I will certainly listen to you; else I should be quite easy to hear no more, as my confidence in you is entire and unbounded."

It is impossible to account for the inconsistencies of human feeling. Flattering to her best feelings as her husband's declared confidence in her must be, Mrs. Derville was rather mortified that her husband was not a little, a *very* little jealous; and she wished, as she had often done before, that he had seen how much she had been admired in London.

The next impulse was to exclaim, "Oh, *à propos!* you remember that I wrote you word I saw Lord L. in London?"

"*A-propos* to what?" replied Derville, a shade passing across his brow, and a deep flush overspreading his cheek: "Not *à-propos* to your weaknesses, I conclude?" he added with a smile.

Mrs. Derville now blushed with somewhat of an indignant feeling, because she felt angry that he could for a moment entertain a jealous doubt. But it was indeed only for a moment; and Derville's heart instantly reproached him, while with the most perfect ease he said, "Well, and how does Lord L. look? Does the peerage become him, and he the peerage? and did he ask for me? Till we became rivals, he was, you know, very fond of me."

"You ask me so many questions at once," said Mrs. Derville rather crossly, "I do not know which to answer first. Lord L. looks old for his years; but his manners are the same. He is not rendered proud by the accession of rank.—He did ask after you when we first met; but though I often saw him, I did not often converse with him."

"No! How strange! I should have

thought it must have been so pleasant to you to meet with an old friend amongst strangers!"

"To meet with an old friend merely, would have been so; but....."

Here she was interrupted by Jane's exclaiming, "Lord L.! Oh! that was the gentleman, mamma, who used to look so fixedly at you, and quite disconcert you by his gaze;—and then he used to sigh so deeply."

"Yes; and when you used to sing," said Lionel, "he used to hold his head on one side and look so ridiculously affected."

At another time Derville would have chidden his son for speaking severely of any one; but now he was not sorry to hear him say that Lord L. looked ridiculous and affected.

"Is this true, Anna?" said he smiling. "Did Lord L. exhibit these symptoms of still existing love?"

"He did."

"O fie! it was very wrong in him. However, poor man, I ought to pity him, and do most sincerely."

"But you would not have had me converse much with him, I suppose?"

"No, certainly not; and I commend you for not doing so, as, untold, I am sure you did not."

"On the contrary I avoided conversing with him, as I resented his boldness in daring to betray feelings which it was culpable in him to feel, and degrading to me to witness the expression of."

"Poor Lord L.!" cried Derville; "and so not even his coronet could procure him one smile in reward of his obtruded constancy? I am sure then I do not envy him his peerage, Anna!"

"It is a fine thing to be a peer, Derville, and I have often caught myself of late wishing you were one."

"Me a peer!"

"Yes;—are not bishops peers?"

"And do you really wish me a bishop, Anna? Do you wish to leave this peaceful retreat, in which we have been so happy?"

"I do sometimes; though I never wished to be Lady L."

"Well, well," said Derville, "I must, I see, forgive you what you have wished, in favour of what you have not."

"Why, papa," cried Jane, "what merit is there in mamma's not wishing herself married to Lord L.? You are ten times younger-looking and handsomer than he is; and when I have taught you to tie your neckcloth as Lord N. does—" she continued, fondly hanging about him as she spoke—

"And when *I*," said Lionel (smoothing down his dark and glossy hair) "have taught you to brush your hair in front *à-la-mode de* Sir Mordaunt Williams and myself—why then—"

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"Why *then*," cried Derville laughing, "you will have made me an old coxcomb!"

"Old! *old*, papa! I am sure I did not see any man to compare to you during my absence, not even in beauty;—fashion, you know, is another thing."

"But come, Anna, is there no alteration in your old-fashioned husband that *you* wish to make?" cried Derville as his wife drew near the affectionate group.

"None," said she, as she threw herself into his extended arms: "Thou hast no faults, or I no faults can spy." And again Mrs. Derville retired to rest, feeling and owning herself the happiest woman in the world. That evening too had brought a few lines from Mrs. Arlington, assuring her of her continued health and grateful love.

The next morning she rose, meaning to be very notable and to resume her household duties directly; but she went

over her house, made a great bustle, seemed very busy, and did nothing."

"What furniture and plate, &c. have you brought down with you?" asked Derville, when they met at dinner. "I have heard very little of Lady Ann's legacy!"

"There is little to hear. I was much disappointed in its value; and Mr. Farrell and I agreed that I had better sell most of the furniture and some of the china ornaments and plate, and buy new.—I should have liked to have had two or three things which I gave up to Lady Lucy."

"And why did you not take them?"

"Because she wished to have them; and she was so civil that I really had a pleasure in obliging her—though Mr. Farrell advised me not."

"Interest would make any one civil: however, I had rather she should be able to say that you were generous, than that you were selfish. But now be so good

as to tell me more about Mrs. Arlington: her letter to me bespeaks a woman of education; of great kindness of heart; and her invitation is a tempting one: but this is all I know, and I believe you know little more."

"No, we do not; except that she is one of the most beautiful, graceful, accomplished and enviable of women."

"Enviable! Has she a husband and children, Anna?"

"Not children, certainly; and perhaps not a husband: and so far," said she smiling, "I know women more to be envied:—but her house, her grounds, her style of living—Indeed, Derville, I should like to live just like Mrs. Arlington: I mean with you and my children, not without."

"But still you do not know who she is?" Here the entrance of Mr. Travers put a stop to the conversation, but it was renewed as soon as he was seated.

"Well, Travers," said Mr. Derville, "I can't find out who my wife's new friend is."

"I begin to think I have discovered," replied Mr. Travers; "but my ideas and recollections on the subject are very imperfect and confused. I think she was a Miss Louisa Fortescue. But Arlington is not her real name."

"Not her *real* name!" exclaimed his auditors in some consternation.

"No; for some reason or other, I suspect that she is separated from her husband, whose name I think is Seymour."

"Seymour!" exclaimed Jane; "then we saw his picture. There was a curtain before it, which I undrew. It was the picture of a very handsome man, and I asked who it was. I remember now that she sighed deeply, turned away, and said 'The gentleman's name is Seymour.'"

"Very strange! and very mysterious!" said Derville thoughtfully.

"It has always a bad appearance," said Travers, "when a wife is separated from her husband, and lives in such splendour! and this lady too goes by another name, and that not her maiden name! Surely, before you continue this intimacy, you ought to inquire more concerning this lady, for Jane's sake, and also for yours, my dear madam, for you are as yet too young and too lovely to be known to associate with ladies of doubtful character."

"My dear sir," eagerly replied Mrs. Derville, "it is true that I have had no means of knowing how women who are not good, look and talk and behave; but I feel it to be impossible, that any woman can look and talk and act like Mrs. Arlington, who is not pure and faultless in thought and in deed."

"You are pure yourself, my dear ma-

dam, and therefore it is impossible for you to suspect the purity of another. Those who are consciously good are not apt to suspect the virtue of others."

"Then how is it that you suspect Mrs. Arlington, sir?"

"Fairly retorted," cried Derville.

"But you must own," said Mr. Travers, "that the situation is a singular one?"

"True; but all singular situations are not guilty ones. For instance, what must any one have thought, who knew the danger to which my husband was exposed from the contagion in Lovelands, if they had heard me singing, and seen me going about to parties, and enjoying myself, as if all was well and safe at home? This was a suspicious situation: Yet still—how innocent I was even of impropriety at the moment!"

"Well," replied Derville with a benevolent smile, "I like to hear you de-

fend your new acquaintance, and I will answer her letter; but it may be as well to make some inquiries concerning her, and Farrell will do it for us. But come, before it is dark let us take a walk and visit some of my parishioners; though even now I will not allow you to go into all the cottages, lest there be any remains of infection."

"No, no," said Mr. Travers, "do you stay at home, or go somewhere else; I want to have a *tête-à-tête* with your wife, and I choose to have it now."

"Very well; but I suppose I may be allowed to come and meet you? and in the mean while I will take the children to see a new prospect station which I have discovered."

When they were alone together, Mr. Travers told Mrs. Derville that he wished her to visit the cottagers and others of the parishioners without her husband, that she might have the delight of hear-

ing his praises from their own lips, a tribute of which respect would prevent their payment in his presence; and Mrs. Derville thanked him heartily for his considerate attention.

Nor was it needless: and the delighted Mrs. Derville enjoyed that gratification most dear to the heart of a virtuous and affectionate wife,—the well-earned praises and blessings bestowed on a beloved husband by grateful beings whom he had either served, saved, or consoled.

When Derville met them on their return, the flushed cheeks, and red, tearful eyes of his wife filled him at first with anxiety; but the affectionate smile and tender pressure of his hand with which she welcomed him, soon dissipated his alarm; and Travers kindly said, "Do not regret your wife's tears, for they are the tears of pride and of happiness." And that evening she again forgot that the rooms were small, and that the supper was

served on queen's ware. The next day brought another letter from Mrs. Arlington in answer to one which Mrs. Derville had written to announce her safe arrival and happy meeting with her husband; and to which Mary Ann had added a postscript to inform her that Nelly had two puppies, one of which (the handsomest) she was bringing up for her. This letter was a franked one; and on opening it they found a paper inclosed, on the outside of which was written "A christening present for Nelly," and the following note to Mary Ann:

"My dear child,

"I beg my intended pet may be named Caius if it be a dog; and, as is usual on such occasions, I, as sponsor, send a present, of which, however, you are to have the sole disposal under the direction and care of your good father, who will, I am sure, dispose of it in the best possible

manner for the benefit of the young Gracchi. Your affectionate friend,

"LOUISA ARLINGTON."

The paper was opened, and the delighted but wondering Mary Ann held up three bank notes. The amount was .....but I will not say what it was, for I know that some of my readers will say, "Nonsense! it was far too much for her to give!" and others would exclaim, "Shame on her! she ought to have given a great deal more, if she meant to show her gratitude to the mother for her having saved her life." Therefore, I will avoid all risk of offending the prudent and the money-loving on one hand, and the over-generous on the other, who are usually, alas! those who have nothing to give,—and will not disclose the amount of the bank-notes, except by implication. When Derville saw the notes, he would have given one of them at that moment to be sure that Mrs. Arlington was, and always had

been the angel which his wife described her to be: as, though he saw that this gift was only the result of a generous and perhaps a proud heart, eager to show its sense of a benefit received, and that this gift would only be the forerunner of more bounties; still, what he could have received with pleasure from the hand of unblemished excellence, he shrunk from receiving from that of doubtful virtue. But he discarded the uncandid thought again immediately; and while his wife and elder children expatiated with delight on the handsome manner in which Mrs. Arlington had contrived to make her present, he took the amazed and perplexed Mary Ann on his knee, to explain to her what Mrs. Arlington meant, and what they admired.

"But, papa," said Mary Ann, "what was there so charming in Mrs. Arlington's sending bank-notes for the puppy? If it was my body else, I should say it was silly; for

you know, papa, if I were to give it to him, he would only tear it in pieces."

"Very true; but you are not ordered to give it to him; you are told to give it to me—that is, to put it under my care, as I shall know how to dispose of it for the benefit of the young Gracchi."

"Yes."

"Well then, listen, Mary Ann! I shall put this money out to interest, and it will bring in such a sum; and as you are the mistress of Nelly and her puppies, it will enable you, you see, to provide very handsomely for them indeed—a chicken now and then, or a bottle of wine and fine fruit, and so on."

"O dear, papa, but it would be quite a shame to give dogs such things! And besides, they don't want them, and would be just as happy without; and that money would buy you something, and mamma, and Lionel, and sister, and me too, papa. O dear! I am sure Mrs. Arlington

can't expect me to lay out that money on dogs."

"No, my child," replied Derville, "no; Mrs. Arlington has no such wish; and now, therefore, perhaps you will understand why your mother and Lionel and Jane were so charmed with the delicate manner in which she made you this present, by pretending it was for the puppy on its being named."

"Then it was make-believe; papa, and I thought that was wrong."

"So make-believe always is, my dear, when meant to deceive; but this was meant for no such purpose. Now listen, Mary Ann: Mrs. Arlington is a very very rich lady, and your mother has saved her life: now we are not rich; and though our income is good, part of it is only life income: therefore, though Lionel at my death will have my living, as it is a family one, the rest of my fortune will not be large enough to enable me to leave

much to you and Jane:—this present, then, to you, will be a welcome addition to your fortune, Mary Ann."

"My fortune, papa! Why, to be sure, you will give half to Jane! I shall not keep it all!"

"Good child!" said the gratified father; while Jane kissed her glowing cheek. "Yes, my dear, you must keep it all, or I will keep it for you, for such was the design of the donor; and I am very sure that she will find some way of being equally generous to Lionel and Jane—but all in good time."

"So am I," said Mrs. Derville; and Lionel and Jane silently acquiesced in the opinion.

"But now listen again, Mary Ann. You are only eight, I think?"

"O yes! I am almost nine, papa."

"Well, this money put out to interest (and I can get five per cent. for it, I know,

in some of the public stocks), if we let the interest accumulate,—that is, do not take it out and spend it,—will double itself in seven years; and by the time you are rather more than two-and-twenty it will make you a pretty little fortune."

"Me, papa! Oh! how kind in Mrs. Arlington!—But why did she not give it to me at once, and not send it to me for the dogs?"

"I will tell you:—that would have looked as if she said, 'You are poor, and I owe you an obligation; so take this money—I know you want it;—but by giving it thus, she seems to throw a veil over her real motives, and delicately—and"....Derville was really puzzled; and not less so, when Mary Ann interrupted him with, "But after all, papa, it is the same thing, you know, and you are poor, and Mrs. Arlington thinks you so. I cannot see the beauty of all this make-be-

lieve." And Derville could not help laughing as he replied, "Indeed, Mary Ann, on second thoughts, no more can I: and if Mrs. Arlington had said, 'I wish to provide for the children, as their mother has served me so greatly, by giving them something out of my superfluity,' I should not have felt justified in being offended, or in refusing; still, I own the manner she adopted showed some delicacy of mind."

"Some! Oh, a great deal!" exclaimed all but Mary Ann, as they were very tenacious of Mrs. Arlington's reputation for every thing exalted; but little Mary Ann, on this occasion, could have exclaimed like Mungo in the farce, "How can me like what me no understand?"

That day, after this new excitement occasioned by this communication from Mrs. Arlington had subsided, Mrs. Derville resumed, but imperfectly, her daily occupations; and she broke off gladly to unpack some things just arrived by the wag-

gons from London. But it was difficult for her to find places for all her acquisitions, and she found that both the china and plate closets must be enlarged, or new ones made. Yet how to do this she did not know, as she designed to convert a sort of light closet, which commanded a fine view and had a tent-bed in it, into a *boudoir*, though how to spare the room was a consideration of no small difficulty. "Little did I think I had so many wants!" said Mrs. Derville as she looked over her rooms and her furniture; "it is surprising how I could be so long satisfied with such a slender store of conveniences! Positively, we have hardly a chair fit to sit upon; I must have *chaises longues* instead of that lumbering old-fashioned sofa.

Nor was it long before she made a general complaint to her husband of the impossibility to exist any longer without certain articles, to obtain which part of the legacy must be expended: "And I as-

sure you," she added, "Lionel is very willing to engage to spend the less the first year at college."

"Well, that is as you and he please," replied Derville gravely; "Lionel is your child as well as mine, and his college-comforts must be as dear to you as to me;—if he is willing to spend less on real necessaries that you may spend more on fancied wants, so be it."

"*Fancied* wants! Mr. Derville."

"Yes, my dear; are they not so? The sofa is quite as good as ever it was, though it is not so new-fashioned; and we have hitherto been so happy and so good-natured, that we have not needed a *boudoir*, or room to pout in—is not that the proper translation of the word *boudoir*, Anna?"

"Nonsense," cried Mrs. Derville pettishly; "call it dressing-room if you will. I want a room I can call my own to sit in in a morning, and receive company in."

"Have you not two parlours?"

"Yes."

"And will they not hold morning visitors more conveniently than a closet? I conclude you do not mean to put the *boudoir* to the original use of such apartments,—that of an apartment sacred to a *tête-à-tête?*"

Mrs. Derville, conscious that her husband's raillery and observations were just, felt a little angry, and replied that indeed she had no room quite big enough to breathe freely in, and that the house now seemed to her quite a nutshell."

"But a nutshell still full of its sweet-flavoured meat, I hope?" he gently replied. "If your rooms are small, they have hitherto been 'little rooms of great comfort,' Anna, have they not? and I trust they will be so again. If not, O Mrs. Arlington! your postillion and you will have much to answer for!"

So saying, with a pained and mortified

expression of countenance he left the room; and Mrs. Derville, finding, on consulting with the carpenter whom she had sent for, that enlarging the closets would cost a great deal of money, resolved to give up converting the closet up-stairs into a *boudoir* which she did not want, but to convert it into a china-closet which she did want; as Lady Anne's bequest of china was really large and handsome. Some of the vases and dishes, however, in imitation of Lady Lucy and Mrs. Arlington, she resolved, though at the risk of having them thrown down, to set in her drawing-room, (as she now called the best parlour,) on brackets, and in stands made for the purpose.

When she next saw her husband, it was with the painful consciousness that her dissatisfaction with the comparative poverty and smallness of her home had given him pain; but the resolution she had made to carry her point, and make

her house as elegant as possible, determined her to conquer the impulse of her heart, and to prove to him by her silence relative to what he had said when he left the room, that without the indulgencies which she required, her comfort in her home could never in future be what it had been;—and this was the first uncomfortable meal the husband and wife had ever eaten together.

Mrs. Derville only spoke to complain of the uncomfortableness of the chairs, and to declare that they were so large and wide, they made the little room still less;—then the tables had better be sent to London to be sold, and the new-fashioned table that shuts up and draws out bought in its stead. As to the sofa, that was not to be borne with a day longer. "How ungrateful this is in you, Anna," said Derville reproachfully, "when you must recollect how comfortably you have often reclined on it after your confinements or

little illnesses, and declared, while I sat on one side of it reading you to sleep, that no bed was ever more comfortable! Anna, the couch is the same, and your nurse is also unchanged—But—" Here he paused, and starting up abruptly left the room.

When once persons are very wrong, it is difficult to get right again—and Mrs. Derville felt this. Her heart whispered, "Follow your husband, and tell him you are no more altered than he or the sofa, and that you own the sofa is a very good sofa." But pride whispered, that Derville did not make sufficient allowances for the different life which she had lately led, and the elegant style of furniture, &c. to which she had lately been accustomed; and that he ought not to resent so highly her very natural dissatisfaction with accommodations so very different to those which she had left. "What would Lady Lucy say, and what would Lord

this, or Lady t'other think, if they were to visit her by chance, and see how unstylish every thing about her was? No, for his own sake, and especially in case Mrs. Arlington should ever be their guest, she must get things a little smart about her—" And she did not follow her husband.

Derville wandered out to the furthest and most lonely extremity of the banks of the lake, not only to conceal his emotion from every eye, but also to commune with his own heart, and ask himself whether he did not too keenly feel these little follies of his wife, and too visibly resent them. She had been, he heard from Lionel, excessively admired and courted whithersoever she went; and he saw that if she had given him encouragement, she might have led her old lover, now an admired man of high rank, an avowed captive in her chains. But this vicious indulgence of her vanity, not only

exclusive love for him had forbidden, but principle and an innate delicacy and purity of feeling, which led her to loathe even the appearance of a homage repugnant to good morals. Why then should he so severely judge such a slight evidence of woman's weakness in her?

"I was wrong—I was very wrong; and by such expressions of my quick feelings I am not likely to reconcile her to retirement and to her home, if indeed, as it now seems, her heart is in a degree alienated from it. Well then, I will return home and seek her out, and speak kindly to her; but I dare say I shall meet her coming out in search of me."

His hopes however deceived him; and he found Mrs. Derville still in the parlour, and looking over some new silver forks which were just arrived. She turned her head on his entrance, and held up one to him with a forced smile; but her look was calm, and to his surprise he saw no

gons from London. But it was difficult for her to find places for all her acquisitions, and she found that both the china and plate closets must be enlarged, or new ones made. Yet how to do this she did not know, as she designed to convert a sort of light closet, which commanded a fine view and had a tent-bed in it, into a *boudoir*, though how to spare the room was a consideration of no small difficulty. "Little did I think I had so many wants!" said Mrs. Derville as she looked over her rooms and her furniture; "it is surprising how I could be so long satisfied with such a slender store of conveniences! Positively, we have hardly a chair fit to sit upon; I must have *chaises longues* instead of that lumbering old-fashioned sofa.

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Lionel had not yet seen Eustace; and when he entered the room, the unaffected cordiality of his manner would have made him amends for the coldness of Jane's, if the attentions of friendship could ever make the heart that loves amends for the neglect and the disdain of the object beloved.

Lionel's eyes sparkled and his cheek glowed at sight of his friend; and Derville said to himself, "At least there is one of them unsophisticated and unchanged!"

"Well, Eustace, how are you? I am delighted to see you," exclaimed Lionel, as Eustace, expressing his welcome more by an agitated grasp of his hand than by words, arose to meet him: "But where were you the evening we arrived? and why have we not seen you before? I assure you, Jane and I both expected to see you on the road, to give us a welcome, just before we turn off at the gate that leads to your house."

Jane at these words pretended to take up and examine the silver forks, as she could not deny what Lionel said, and did not like to seem to hear it without denying it: but she very anxiously expected the answer; and her father was no uninterested and unobservant spectator of what was passing.

"It was my intention to be waiting at that very gate," said Eustace; "but just as I was setting off for it, I was summoned to do duty at a church some miles off, where the minister was suddenly taken ill as he was going to bury a corpse; nor would he allow me to come away—because he was sure he was dying—till this very evening; and then being suffered to leave him, I came hither, without even going home."

"Now I shall see what effect this has on Jane," thought her anxious father; and to his inexpressible joy he saw her turn round with a blushing cheek and a

smile of the sweetest animation; and holding out one of the forks to Eustace, "See!" she cried, "what extravagancies we have been guilty of!"

There was nothing in the action itself, but the manner of it was every thing. Eustace took the fork, his eyes met hers; he understood her late coldness and supercilious civility; his heart beat with renewed hope; and as he pressed her hand on returning the fork, he thought, nay he was sure, the pressure was gently returned.

Derville's heart was also lightened of this new load, and in time he was sure his wife would be kind to him again.

The servant now brought in a packet that came by the post, franked by a secretary of state. It was large, and evidently contained nothing but writing. It was directed to Mrs. Derville. She eagerly opened it, and found it was from Mrs. Arlington.

Mrs. Derville read a few minutes t

herself: but her bosom soon heaved, and her eyes filled with tears; till at length, unable to subdue her feelings, she threw herself on her husband's neck, and faintly murmuring out "Forgive me, my best love!" she hid her face on his shoulder.

Mrs. Arlington wrote as follows.

The History of Mrs. Arlington.

"The Lawn-House.

"From a palace, the seat of sad and solitary grandeur, I address you at your simple dwelling, the abode of maternal love and of wedded happiness. Long after you left me I followed your carriage wheels in fancy, and envied you your progress; for you were hastening to the home of your youth and the husband of your heart, and that husband a being to glory in. And I smiled with bitterness while I remembered that to you I had appeared an object of envy:—Aye, and perhaps I appear so still; for I am doubt-

ful of what may be your feelings when this packet reaches you.

"A few days will then have elapsed since your reunion with this beloved husband; and after the first fond emotions have subsided, the ambitious love of grandeur and the luxuries of life, which new circumstances had, I saw, awakened in your bosom, will have had leisure to show itself; and already I can fancy you projecting alterations, devising new expenses, and a little angry with Mr. Derville for not sympathizing with you in your wants and dissatisfactions. Yes; methinks I can behold unusual gloom over his placid brow, and a feeling of discontent, for the first time in your life, damping your former consciousness of being blest beyond your sex's charter. If I have fancied and foreboded aright, repent the unworthy and ungrateful sensations; hasten in penitent love to implore the pardon of that husband, whom

your woman's weakness, however excuseable, may have wounded; and when you have been clasped to his forgiving bosom, read to your family the pages which for your sake I have written—written to convince you how blest your lot has been; and that, were your residence a hovel, such a partner of it should make it a paradise—written to make you for ever a stranger to aught of frivolous repinings and frivolous wishes, and to bid you bend in humble and contrite thankfulness to Heaven, while you read the History of LOUISA ARLINGTON."

Mrs. Derville had read thus far, when unable to endure any longer the reproaches of her own heart, thus powerfully called into action, she addressed her husband as mentioned above: and when Eustace was gone, Derville read the following narrative to his deeply interested wife and children:

"I was the only surviving child of many,

and was consequently watched over with more than the usual care of parental affection. But my parents though tender were judicious, and their fondness did not show itself in unbounded indulgence of all my desires, the result always of selfishness rather than well-principled affection; but it manifested itself in such salutary restraints and wise contradictions as are best calculated to secure the future good of its object.

"It is often difficult to say what is cause and what is effect;—but whether my education influenced my temper, or my temper was fitted to profit by my education, I know not: certain however it is, that I was gentle and submissive under parental authority, and that nothing could equal my obedience to my parents, but my veneration and my love for them.

"My grandfather on the paternal side, though the younger son of a nobleman, had entered into trade, and made a very large fortune, and my father was his

only child. I therefore was an heiress of considerable expectations, consequently no expense was spared on my education; and as I had early evinced a talent for music, the first masters were employed to perfect me both in singing, and in playing on different instruments; and till I was sixteen, our winters were all passed in London. But at that time my mother's health became so much affected by the fogs of the metropolis, that we removed to an estate which my father had recently purchased in the immediate vicinity of a large provincial town, and my musical instructors promised that they would continue their lessons occasionally at our own house, when the London season was over.

"There was a regiment of dragoon guards quartered in the town near which we resided; and though I was not what is called *out*, being at the time I mention not seventeen, I was nevertheless well

acquainted with the officers; and one of them, a young lieutenant, though he paid me no particular attention and seemed to consider me as a child, engaged my exclusive admiration.

"If personal beauty in a man can excuse affection in woman, he had sufficient to justify the most unbounded; but he had much more effective and certain recommendations,—a grace of manner which I never yet saw equalled, and a tone of voice which when once heard could never be forgotten.

"This dangerous young man did not remain long with the regiment at this period; for he was sent away on a recruiting party, leaving behind him a character for extravagance and immorality, which those who admired him, and myself amongst the rest, excused on the score of his youth. But I, however charmed, should have forgotten him; had he not returned to the regiment at the period

when all officers join, and just time enough to witness my first appearance at a public ball.

"It is not to be supposed that the heiress of the rich Mr. Fortescue could appear at her first ball without being an object of notice, if not of admiration; and perhaps I was both;—certainly, to the young lieutenant I seemed an object of both;—and as he was the son of a baronet, and his connexions were good, my father could not object to him as a partner for his daughter.

"But why should I dwell on the dangerous pleasures of that evening, and of many that succeeded it?

"I was prepared to like him, from my previous impressions in his favour, spite of his imputed errors; and he succeeded only too well, in convincing me that he loved me.

"At length he made me proposals of marriage; and I referred him to my pa-

rents, who had always declared that, as money was no object with them, they would never object to any one whom I loved, provided his character was unexceptionable, and he was likely to make me happy.

"To be brief: My father, unequivocally rejected my lover's suit, and gave him his reasons why he did so, as I afterwards too well knew. He told him that, being aware of my growing partiality for him, he had made minute inquiries into his character and disposition, and that he must be well aware what the result of his inquiries had been; that he had learnt his temper, when not restrained by powerful motives, such as those of interest and fear, was taunting, tormenting, and tyrannical; and what his habits of life were, it did not, he added, become him to discuss; that therefore, however distinguished his family was, and however fascinating his manners,

such a man should never, with his consent, be the husband of his daughter.

"My lover pleaded his youth as an excuse for his errors, and assured my father, that as his love for me would make him wax in my hands, his irritability of temper would be conquered by my gentleness and endearing qualities. But he argued in vain, and his suit was positively rejected: and my mother was desired by my considerate father to break his commands on this subject to me.

"Though in a degree prepared for the communication, as I had always seen my father's eye sternly fixed on him, and anxiously on me, whenever he had been present at our interviews, it completely overwhelmed me; and my distress was such, that my indulgent mother promised to prevail on my father, if possible, to say, that if my lover in process of time should seem to have repented the error of his ways, and to be a reformed character

both in habits and temper, he would allow him to visit at the house. But her efforts were unavailing, and I saw myself apparently for ever separated from the man who I believed had been in a great measure belied from the calumnies of those who envied him his charms and his acomplishments, and whom, in spite of parental prohibition and of my usual obedience to it, I tenderly and fervently loved. And my lover was careful to keep up the impression which he had made, by throwing himself in my way whenever he had any opportunity. He used to watch my father from his home; and then, if my mother and I drove out, or I rode out with the servant, I used to see him leaning on some gate in the road, and looking the very picture of hopeless misery; while he took care that every one should be able to tell us that he shut himself up, never dined at mess, and was looking woe-worn and pale

—an altered man in every respect. All this had a powerful effect on my mother as well as on myself; and when she saw that I too grew thin and looked pale, she thought my father carried his resolution too far, and that he had been too severe in his judgement, and too positive in his refusal.

"At this time my father was forced to go on business to London; and he had not been gone long, when my lover wrote to my mother, whose pitying looks when he met us had not been lost on him, inclosing a letter for myself, which respect for parental authority, and my principles, prevented him, he said, from attempting even to get delivered another way; but which he earnestly conjured her, if she valued his well-being here and his salvation hereafter, to allow me to read.

"My mother was affected by the solemn earnestness of his adjuration; softened by his apparent misery, and flattered probably by the consciousness that love for

her daughter was its cause;—and *my father was absent.*

"Accordingly she allowed me to read this fatal letter, the contents of which remained indelibly engraven on my mind. —He owned and lamented the irritability of his temper, and the errors into which youth and the ardour of his passions had led him; but that, as the influence of virtuous love was even proverbial, and he had never felt it till now, he was sure that if I would but be his wife, I should not only reform and render exemplary his conduct on earth, but I should save his soul from otherwise inevitable destruction, and lead a sinner to repentance and to mercy.

"From that moment I resolved on principle not to attempt to subdue my attachment, and my mother herself espoused his cause; while I saw with satisfaction that my mind preyed on my health, and that my appearance was so indicative of indisposition, that my father on his

return could not fail to be struck with the alteration.

"He was struck with it indeed,—nay, the sight overwhelmed him. He beheld the darling of his heart, the sole survivor of many beloved children, apparently about to follow them to the grave, the victim of a hopeless attachment. Yet painful as this apprehension was, he thought he could better bear to see me die, than unite myself to a man such as he believed my lover to be, and who would no doubt render my existence wretched.

"But he miscalculated the strength of his resolution; and he found at last, that any thing was preferable to seeing me die by inches, willed as it were to perish by him; and if I must perish, he felt that he had rather I should die the victim of my own obstinacy, than of his. In short, as my mother was openly our friend, and my father's own heart betrayed him, we carried our point: and as soon as Mr.

Seymour had left the army, we were married.

"Various and severe were the animadversions which my persevering attachment occasioned; and I was accused of having married from motives of vanity—the vanity of believing that my charms of person and of mind would reclaim a libertine. But those accusers were superficial judges of the human heart, and of mine. I married *because I loved*—because no common attractions of manner and person had fascinated my taste, and thrown a spell over my judgement; and that, like all women in love, I had implicit reliance on the assurances of the beloved object. He said that not only his happiness and his virtue depended on my becoming his wife, but his salvation—and I believed him. Can my union with him after that be a matter of wonder?

"Well, we were married; and my generous father was not only most liberal

in his settlements on me, but he was bountiful to my husband also: and he seemed so impressed by my father's noble conduct, and paid him such marked and flattering attention, that my mother blessed the hour when she became his advocate; and I looked forward to days of uninterrupted happiness.

"My mother did not long survive our union, and she died blessing it, and believing it would be blest.

"We had not been married many months when we went on a tour through Scotland; during which (when alone and unrestrained by my father's presence, who, with a cousin of his, accompanied us on our journey) I discovered that my husband's temper, though restrained, was not improved; and I began to see on what a sandy foundation the fabric of my wedded bliss was built.

"But my resolution was instantly taken to bear whatever he inflicted with patience

and in silence, and endeavour to conceal for ever from all eyes, but more especially from the eyes of my father, the misery for which I had only to blame my own weakness, blindness, and obstinate attachment; and, like the Spartan boy, I resolved to hide from every eye the pangs which would probably prey on my vitals.

"When we returned from Scotland we took a house in town, and I left the paternal roof. O the agony, the foreboding agony, of that moment! But the education which I had received had taught me self-command; and I was able to take leave of my agitated and agonized parent with such quiet and subdued sorrow, in appearance, as astonished even myself. But its secret violence did not escape my conscious husband: he saw that my eyes were opened to the fate that awaited me; and as he bore me from my once happy home, he resolved to wear no longer the mark that had fatigued him.

"As soon as the carriage drove off, he turned round to me, and said, with a smile of bitter sarcasm, 'I never saw finer specimens of despair and resignation than you and your doting father exhibit, madam; why, you look as if you were just going to execution, and the chaplain was exhorting you! And as to your father,—insolent driveller,—does he think I have forgotten that he refused me for your husband, and had the impudence to tell me why?—to tell me also that he abhorred my morals and feared my temper, and that he had rather follow you to your grave than to the altar with me! If I ever forgive it....'

"Here his utterance became choked with passion, while a mixture of prudence and emotion kept me silent: nor did he speak for several minutes. But the horrible expression of his countenance gradually subsided, nay, it was even exchanged for that of insinuating

softness and animated brightness :—It was the rainbow succeeding to the thunder-cloud; and ah! it was transient like that.

"He now condescended to soothe my fluttered spirits, apologized for the violence of his temper, asked me if it was not provoking to see his bride leave her parental roof for that of a young and adoring husband, looking like a condemned victim going to be sacrificed, and as if all her affections were centred in her father! He also asked if I did not admit that he had reason to be angry with what my father had said to him. And so winning was his manner, so blinded was I by my love, and so willing to be blinded, that I absolutely admitted that both my father and I were wrong, and that his taunting and cruel language was in a degree to be excused. But ours were young connubial days as yet; and I soon ound that every future day teemed with

similar indulgences of temper, for which not even my blindly-devoted love could find an excuse.

"Still, how delightful, how attentive, and how fond, he could seem in company! for he was excessively jealous of his reputation; and being conscious that his temper was suspected to be diabolical, he reproached me with virulence one day for having, he was convinced, injured him in the opinion of the world by my pale cheek and dismal looks, which, he was sure, were attributed to him; and he insisted on my wearing rouge, to hide my paleness, and by that means stop impertinent observation.

"I obeyed, and even tried to be as gay as I used to be: but my strongest motive for obedience in this particular was the wish to deceive my father, as well as the world, and to lay asleep, if I could, his ever watchful tenderness.

"And Oh! how comforted I felt when-

ever I was sure that I succeeded! But this was a difficult task;—my father was so restless and so suspicious that all was not right,—especially as he found that my husband spent a great deal of money, and was reported to play high, though I did not know it,—that he was frequently coming to town; and when he came unexpectedly, it was with great difficulty indeed that I could entirely conceal my sufferings:—when I expected him, by the aid of art and great effort I could look like what I once was. However, two years had worn away pleasantly enough in company,—for there my husband was all I could wish him,—but miserably at home, when I had a prospect of increasing my family. However, my joy was damped by the sorrow which my husband expressed, and by his daily declarations that brats were good for nothing but to bring trouble and expenses on their parents; for which the pleasure of having them was

no equivalent; and also by the consciousness which I now had, that as he never had any money for the most trivial wants, he must have means of disposing of his income of which I was wholly ignorant.

"I have hitherto omitted to say, but I will assert it, that had my father wanted other reasons to dislike my marriage with the man of my choice, he had a sufficient one in his desire to marry me to the man of his; and that man was one whom any parent must have delighted in seeing the choice of his child, and any woman might have been proud of making her own. Can I praise him more than by saying that he was in temper and disposition an exact contrast to my husband, and that his countenance was a fit index to the mind and heart which animated it? But I was blind—infatuated—obstinate—weak!—and I rejected him, to wed his opposite. On my marriage he

accepted a diplomatic mission, and went abroad; being unable, it was said, to stay in England after that event. However that might be, he returned to it again when I had been married about two years and a half; and I not only frequently met him in company, but my husband asked him continually to the house. Why he did so I cannot tell, except that it was in hopes I might give him an opportunity of reproaching me with being too attentive to an old admirer, and of charging me with impropriety of conduct. But he knew not the man whom he thus tried to lead into temptation, nor the woman whom he thus endeavoured to place in dangerous and difficult situations. My former lover refused all his invitations to our house, except when I opened my doors to all the world; and if a feeling of former attachment glowed within his bosom, he respected me too much to

let it appear in his looks or manner: but he pitied me, deeply pitied me; for his eye soon discovered the real wretch, under the gay trifler in fashionable circles; and I saw that he beheld the increasing paleness of my sunk cheek under the bright tints which covered it.

"Nay, once he overheard some terrible invectives with which my husband assailed me, as he was leading me to my carriage, when he wanted me to set him down at the Opera, and fancied I was unwilling to come away;—and never, never shall I forget the look of fruitless and tender compassion with which he regarded me! I see it yet: and whether my fancy gave it the expression or not, I cannot decide, but it seemed to say, 'Deluded woman, what have you done? destroyed my happiness and your own too!'

"But this was the only moment when his eyes ever spoke to mine: and soon

after he again left England as resident at a distant court; nor have I seen him since.

"I was now within two months of my confinement, and anxiously and earnestly anticipating the event; for I could not help hoping that, spite of his avowed aversion to children, the sight of his own might soften my husband's heart in favour of the mother.

"But my hopes were doomed to be disappointed.

"One morning my husband (who never suffered me to retain any part of my allowance, and kept me therefore as poor as he made himself) entered the inner drawing-room where I was sitting, to ask for whatever money I had about me;—but I had none to give him: and whether his demands were more pressing than usual, or what was the cause, I know not, but he flew into the most ungovernable passion—cursed the

day he ever married me, cursed me for having had the weakness to love him, and to believe he loved me; assuring me that he merely married me for my money, and that he then loved and still loved another woman.

"Bitter, overwhelming as this moment was, which added the pangs of jealousy to the consciousness of never having been loved by the man I doted on, it was but the forerunner of suffering different in its nature, but as agonizing in degree (if any pang can equal that inflicted by jealousy); for, on looking up with a sort of desperate fixedness to the livid and distorted face of my husband—immoveable and as if transfixed with horror, I beheld my father!!! and saw that the misery which I had hitherto so carefully concealed from him, was now revealed to him in all its terrible extent!

"The sight of his despair and the consciousness of his pangs drew from me

what my own had failed to do—a scream of phrensied agony, which caused my husband to turn round, and to behold that unhappy parent whom he had thus stabbed, though unconsciously, to the heart. Instantly, conscience-stricken, he started, hid his face in his hands, and precipitately left the room.

"I cannot dwell on the sad scene which succeeded between my broken-hearted parent and myself;—suffice, that when I threw myself into his arms, as if for protection and for comfort, I ceased to feel as wretched as I had done before, and for a while my consciousness of suffering abated. I must own too, that at the time a feeling of selfishness prevailed; and I was not sorry to be no longer obliged to keep within my own bosom the secret of my sorrows, but was relieved by being able to confide them to the only being on earth of whose affection I could not be deprived, and whose sympathy and

pity for my distress could never know abatement. If there can be a joy in misery, it was mine at that moment.

"My father was the first to break silence; and it was in such a voice, and with such a look as showed me what he was about to utter; and nearly inarticulate with agony, I exclaimed, 'Oh! do not, do not curse him!'

"What my poor father would have replied I know not; but at this moment he saw my pale face assume a still more ghastly hue; and as he caught me in his arms, to save me from falling, he hastily rang the bell for assistance.

"I was instantly conscious of the effect of my late agitation, and that a premature confinement would be the unfortunate result. Nor was I deceived in my forebodings; and for many hours my life hung suspended as it were upon a thread. In the intervals of my suffering I was continually asking for my father, and his

presence always seemed to cheer me; but I never asked for my husband: and I found on my recovery, jealous as he was of appearing to be a beloved and loving husband, that he deeply resented this natural result of outraged feeling and resented cruelty.

"At length the little victim, probably, of a father's brutality, opened its eyes on the light to close them again for ever; and I was consoled by the certainty that no father's blessing would have hailed him to existence.

"As soon as my life was safe, my father told me he must return home; nor did I wonder at his being eager to go, as the sight of my husband was, I saw, become odious to him, though he seemed to feel the greatest possible anxiety during my danger: and well he might; for he knew that his expectations of further wealth must die with me; and I fear that my father put this interpretation on his agonies.

But perhaps we judged him uncandidly, and remorse as well as interest might prompt the evident agitation. My father wished me to accompany him into the country; but I was pronounced too weak to undertake the journey: and as I saw how ill he was able to endure my husband's presence, and was fearful of some terrible scene between them, I forbore to ask him to defer his departure till I was strong enough to go with him. However, unasked, as my husband declared his intention of leaving town, he staid a few days longer; and these were the last days of affectionate enjoyment that I ever knew. During that period I endeavoured to excuse in my husband the cruel declaration, and those overwhelming curses which my father overheard, and I assured him, (which was the truth,) I had been so unwell that day and the preceding one, that the event which we deplored might have taken place had Seymour been less

unkind. I also tried to persuade him that I had occasionally hours of happiness, and did not repent my ill-starred union; and it was so necessary to his peace that he should believe me, that he did so.

"How sweet it was to me to live once more in uninterrupted intercourse with a being who really loved me, who spoke to me always in the tone of affection, and looked on me with eyes of fondness! But the hours flew too rapidly away; and the moment of my husband's return, which was the signal for my father's departure, came on me as an unexpected calamity. And what grief of heart it was to me to think, that the return of *her husband* should drive a father away from an *only child!*

"But it could not be otherwise, and I had only to submit in silence and resignation; but, O that parting! O the agony of that moment, when my father on his knees commended me, with qui-

vering lips and streaming eyes, to the protection and support of my Creator, in the trials to which he was certain that he left me, and then rushed out of the house! The misery of our parting then, could only be exceeded by that of our next meeting.

"When he was gone, I fell into a sort of stupid acquiescence in my fate. I welcomed my husband, who was really kind when we first met, with a smile of tranquillity approaching to imbecillity, which evidently shocked him; and he pressed my pale lip with a degree of affection to which I had long been a stranger.

"I was soon, however, too fatally roused to the keenest sense of suffering. My father was advancing in life, and the agitation and anxiety which he had recently undergone had had a pernicious, nay fatal effect on his frame; for he had not been home above three days when he was seized with a paralytic stroke. An ex-

press was immediately sent off to my husband, who, to do him justice, broke the intelligence in the gentlest manner to me, and, foreseeing that I should wish to set off directly, had ordered horses to the door before he communicated it;—he also insisted on accompanying me, meaning to keep his arrival a secret from my father.

"This kindness, this attention, whatever were its motives, supported me wonderfully under this new and severest of trials; and if I found my poor father sensible, I meant to please him by relating it to him. But alas! when my husband, who left the carriage to ask how my father was, even before he handed me out, returned to me as I leaned in almost breathless agitation against the door of the hall, I saw such an expression of satisfaction on his features as led me to imagine he brought good news; and when he told me on the contrary that I must prepare

myself for the worst, I could not but feel; even at that engrossing moment, that the certainty of my father's fate had occasioned the glad expression which I had observed.

"I therefore rejected involuntarily his offered arm up the stairs, and staggered alone into the chamber of death. Though the last struggles of life were fast approaching, and the powers of utterance were nearly destroyed, the sufferer's perceptions were clear: and instantly recognising me, he held out his hand in welcome; while his dying eyes were turned with unutterable tenderness upon me. I threw myself in an agony of grief beside him; and seeing by a mournful shake of his head that he meant to assure me there was no hope of his recovery, I gave way to the tenderness of lamentation, conjuring him to live for my sake, or *take me with him!* These words too plainly spoke that I was conscious, if I lost him, I should lose every

thing which endeared life to me; and as he tried to embrace me with the arm that had escaped the attack, he said in imperfect accents; and looking up to heaven, 'There! seek there a father, my child,—bless....' and while I hung over him in breathless attention to catch the imperfect and unfinished sentences, he looked wistfully in my face, the arm that grasped me suddenly let go its hold, and his eyes closed to ope no more. I must pause—This recollection always overwhelms me.

"Day succeeded to day and week to week, yet I showed no signs, I have been told, of returning consciousness; and except that I breathed, it was sometimes doubtful whether I existed. At length, however, my youth enabled me to triumph over my disease,—the result of the debility occasioned by sorrow and emotions of a various nature,—and I recovered to a sense of what now was. But such a dreadful conscious-

ness attended returning recollection, that I wished in the first feelings of despair to lose again the sense so lately restored to me; for I seemed to stand alone in the world, unloved, unsoothed, and unsupported!

"The eyes which had regarded me with partial affection during so many years were now closed in the grave; the only heart that loved me with a tenderness which *nothing could chill*, was now still and cold and broken;—and broken by whom? and whose persevering and unduteous obstinacy had led to consequences so fatal and distressing? And yet I live, and still must live! live to suffer—retributive justice wills that I should—and drink to the dregs that bitter cup which I have drugged for myself! Such were my thoughts on recovering my recollection. But fortunately for me, so deep was my contrition for having been the means of my father's sudden fate, so prostrate was I

in true humiliation and self-judgement before the Being who had thus made my offence the means of my punishment,—that I gathered consolation from the excess of my misery, and was thankful that I was allowed to endeavour to expiate by trial the sins which I had committed: and this feeling saved and supported me.

"My husband expressed great joy at my recovery, and was, I have been informed, excessively afflicted at beholding my sad state (no wonder; for had he not, as it were, two lives to answer for already, and might not mine be added to the list?) And when his tears fell on my neck, as he pressed me to his heart on first seeing restored recollection in my eyes, when I opened them on the objects around me, and shudderingly recognised him, my heart reproached me for being so shut up, as it were, against these evidences of his affection; and as I leaned against his bosom, I re-

solved to endeavour *if possible to love him still*, and try to be the object of his love.

"I *did* love him still, spite of all that had passed: and when he devoted his hours, as he now did, to endeavours to amuse and cheer me, I forgot his past cruelty, and only wished my beloved father was alive to witness the happy change. But with my health and recovered calmness my husband's attentions ceased; and I was left alone again to brood over my sorrows; while superior to the rest towered the pang of jealousy, and his declaration that *he had never loved me, but had loved and still loved another*, haunted me wherever I went. And who and where could this rival be? But perhaps he had only said this to torment me. However, the idea, false or true, was always uppermost; and whenever we were at an assembly together, I always watched his countenance when he addressed the young, the beautiful, and the attractive.

"You will wonder, perhaps, to hear me talk of going to assemblies again: but it was part of my duty to do it.

"As the terrible illness which had succeeded my poor father's death was a sufficient proof of the love I bore him, and months of suffering and seclusion had testified my respect for his memory, my next duty was to indulge my husband's wishes:—besides, such, as I said before, was his jealousy with regard to his reputation on certain points, that he was afraid the world should suspect I secluded myself to weep on account of a living husband rather than a dead father. His self-love too was wounded, at the idea that such grief for a parent could be felt by one who was so happy as to call him husband; and he insisted on my putting off mourning and putting on rouge, and on my resuming my usual habits of visiting.

"I obeyed, and even tried to be gay;—and it was curious to observe what a con-

rast to me his manner in society was to his manner at home.

"In company he was still so attentive to me, and so kind, that he flattered himself I should be the envy of wives and of women;—but the moment he had me to himself again, the mask was thrown off, and the domestic tyrant again appeared. He reminded me of the fairy tale, in which the hero was forced by some powerful enchanter to appear in the most beautiful form possible all day, and to change into some sort of monster every night—and the powerful enchanter in this case was *Temper*.

"While I was enduring what this capricious magician inflicted on me, I used to say to myself 'Yes—yes—he spoke the truth. He does not love me, he never did love me, and he loves another;' for that was the mournful burthen of my song. Yet still, I saw no being apparently preferred to me; nor did the ex-

pressive glance of his brilliant eye ever seem to turn on any woman with the tell-tale softness of love.

"However, he was frequently out all day and all night, and there seemed no end to his extravagance and his expenses. When I was able to attend to business, I found—what I had been apprehensive might not be the case—that my father did not alter his will after his last visit to London; but that the legacy to my husband stood as it did before, and this legacy was no less a sum than several thousand pounds.

"The money which he bequeathed to me was so tied up, that I, and I alone, could receive the interest of it. But I had the fee of a considerable sum: and except that my husband did not like to be obliged to ask me to give him such parts of my income as his necessities demanded, I had reason to think he was well satisfied with the will, especially as his

bequest was more than he had ever expected.

"Yet that money was all gone, I knew, soon after it was received; and I began to fear that gaming was the vortex which swallowed up his wealth. I indeed had long been the only person who was a stranger to his love of play and his general profligacy of life. But how could I be otherwise? No one can presume to tell a wife who respects herself and her duties, of the errors of her husband; nor can such an one ever listen for a moment to the offensive tale, even should any one be bold enough to enter upon it: therefore I seemed likely to remain for ever a stranger to my husband's immoralities, or only to guess at them by their ruinous effects. Yet with the usual suspicion that marked his character, he was so afraid that I might be told tales of his conduct, and indulge a weak and unprincipled curiosity in listening to and

seeking them, that he insisted on my gradually dropping my early and intimate friends, on pretence that he was jealous of my loving any one besides himself.

"Another instance of the tyranny which he exercised, and the obedience which he exacted, he gave by desiring me to leave off singing, as he disliked music generally, and my performances particularly, vowing that, when he was sometimes disposed to return home, the dread of hearing my infernal squalling kept him away: besides, he said he thought I sung too well for a gentlewoman, and that as I did not please by the display of that accomplishment the only man whom I ought to wish to please, it was my duty to give it up. This was a hard trial of my obedience indeed; but I obeyed.—O Mrs. Derville! how I envied you when you told me that Mr. Derville delighted to hear you sing! Do

you not remember what I said to you at the moment?

"About this time an important event in my life took place. My mother had an uncle not many years older than herself, who was excessively attached both to her and to my father. He had been my father's school-fellow, and just before they married he went out to India with a very lucrative appointment.

"When he arrived there, he wrote word that it was his earnest desire that one of my mother's children, if she had any, should be christened after him. His name was Louis; and if it was a boy it was to be so called, and if a girl, Louisa. I was the third-born. I was therefore called Louisa, and a friend of his stood proxy at the font for Mr. Arlington.

"During the first years of his residence in India he used to write constantly to my parents: but he had not written for many years, when, as I was one day sit-

ting mournfully in my own apartment, I was told that a gentleman of the name of Arlington wished to see me. It instantly occurred to me that it might be my mother's uncle, and I hastened to him with almost trembling eagerness. I was not deceived; and for awhile he mingled his tears with mine, at the remembrance of my beloved parents.

"I felt his arrival an alleviation of my domestic sufferings; for I had found a heart to sympathize with me in all my regrets for those whom I had lost.

"The only drawback to my pleasure in the society of this truly affectionate relation and admirable man was, the terror I experienced lest he should discover that my unhappiness (which I could not always hide) was occasioned by the living more than by the dead. But this task was made comparatively easy to me by the conduct of my husband, who, finding that my uncle was a man of immense

property, an old bachelor, and my godfather,—determined by every attention in his power to conciliate his favour, in order to induce him when he died to leave me his wealth without any of the restrictions with which my father had encumbered his property. And finding that Mr. Arlington was very fond of singing, he repealed the prohibition mentioned above; and I had not only the satisfaction of gratifying myself by resuming the exercise of a talent which I enjoyed, but the far greater delight of obliging a relation whom I really had learnt to love.

" Mr. Arlington was now so much with us at meals, and I so rarely saw my husband at any other time, that if my life was not happy, it was at least tranquil. And my greatest trial now was, finding my means to relieve the wants of others,—a duty which I had been educated strictly to perform,—exhausted only too constantly by my husband's demands

though, in order to avoid giving me pain, he behaved with great politeness to Mr. Seymour, it was evident even to me that the feelings which he entertained towards him were not those of esteem.

"It was during this twelvemonth that Mr. Arlington bought the Lawn-House and the estates round it, and added to it the baths, the theatre, the pineries, the succession-houses, and all the luxuries which you have seen, admired, and *envied*.—Will you ever envy me again?

"This good old man was become inexpressibly dear to me, and he was useful also; for I found him a sufficient *chaperon* if I went to the opera or a party, and I needed no other beau to se for my carriage and attend me throug the crowd. I was therefore set free fro the necessity of accepting the services idle men of fashion, who would gla have been the *cavaliere servante* of wife whose husband was supposed to

" But though it was possible that this tale might impose on Mr. Arlington twice, it was not likely to do so a third time; and I saw the look of disdainful suspicion with which he regarded my husband.

" Both times, however, he chose to seem to be deceived: and when we were alone he asked me—reminding me that I was not only his niece but his god-daughter,—if the contents of his purse would give me any satisfaction; and I frankly owned that it would.

" For at least a twelvemonth I enjoyed the comfort of this amiable being's society, with the approbation of my husband, who was invariable in his attentions to him; but I was only too sure that Mr. Arlington understood the extent of my wedded trial, and was even far more aware of it, I afterwards found, than I was; for communications were made to him which could not meet my ear; and

though, in order to avoid giving me pain, he behaved with great politeness to Mr. Seymour, it was evident even to me that the feelings which he entertained towards him were not those of esteem.

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at her; and who, however changed by rrow, was once deemed an object of miration.

" Lord N.—(your friend, Jane)—was this time very desirous of being my ob- quious follower: but he soon found that s powers of pleasing were thrown away a woman who thought his flatteries de- aded rather than honoured her; and he sely ceased to try to make me talked , and himself—in that way at least.

" But the chief benefit which I derived om Mr. Arlington's return to England is, that he took from me the feeling forlornness—that most cruel and most inful nearly of all feelings, the pangs self-reproach excepted. For when my her died, and I believed that my hus- nd loved me not,—when I saw my early ends separated from me, and knew that e man who had loved me, and who obably still was interested in my fate, is resident in a foreign land,—I seemed

to myself to stand alone in creation! Wealth seemed a mockery; acquaintances only uninteresting baubles; public spectacles nauseous frivolities; talents empty distinctions; and I was like one who tried to slake his thirst in a garden filled only with fruits of gold and water of quicksilver.

"The affections of my heart were withering: their object had proved unworthy, and gave me scorn and cruelty for love; and I wandered about like St. Leon in the tale, without one feeling of sympathy with the contemporaries around me.

"But Mr. Arlington came, and my heart re-opened to the pleasure of loving and being beloved. With him I could converse of all I had ever held dear; to his amusement, nay to his happiness, I had the certainty of being instrumental, and I might say of being necessary: and while I felt this, I was enabled to endure the trials of my situation with tranquil resig-

ıation. The feeling of jealousy indeed ankled still; but as it had no object to ix on, its bitterness gradually faded away; ınd the more surely, because my hus- ɔand's increasing infirmities of temper ıad the certain consequence of weaken- ng my affection by imperceptible and ılow, but certain degrees.

" But a new misfortune was reserved for me in the death of this beloved uncle; and a complaint in the heart carried him off in one unconscious moment.

" He died at the Lawn-House; and my husband went down thither to attend the funeral and be present at the reading of the will. But he hoped that no will would be found, as in that case Lawn-House and all the property would be his, to do what he pleased with, since I was Mr. Arlington's heir at law. But he was mistaken in his hopes ;—a will was found, and read to his utter confusion and disappointment: for it was so worded

under the direction of the ablest lawyers, that all Mr. Arlington's landed and personal property became mine on his death—solely on these conditions; namely, that I expended not one farthing of my property on my husband (while that husband was Sedley Seymour) in any way whatever. I was forbidden to make him even a present, and on no pretence was he to interfere with my expenditure. If I was guilty of this infraction of his will, and the fact could be proved against me, the estates were to go to his next heir at law, whoever that might be; and the personal property to the person who substantiated the charge.—Kind, considerate, but *injudicious* benefactor!

"This posthumous resentment of my injuries declared only too powerfully to every one that such injuries existed; and by wounding my husband's self-love, as well as by disappointing his hopes, it only served to widen the breach between us.

Never shall I forget, never will I attempt o describe, the scene that awaited me on iis return.

" I was now the mistress of immense 'ealth, over the disposal of which I had nlimited control; and so far I enjoyed ıe prospects it held out to me: but still, was less precious to my own selfish atifications than the society of the do- ır; and though my husband reproached e with hypocrisy, I deeply mourned the ıs of my uncle.

" But I must own that I felt pain at t being able to spend any part of my tune as my heart would have dic- ed,—namely, on my offending yet still ır husband,—though this he swore 'er to believe; and sometimes, to se me, he said he was sure that I tated the will myself: but this I knew did not think, and all I could do I . I bought fine horses and carriages; ave expensive dinners; of the former

he had the free use, and to the latter he invited whomsoever he chose: and when the Lawn-House was ready, I invited thither all those whose society was most pleasing to him: nay, I did still more; the trustees of my marriage settlement had hitherto very properly refused to give up any part of the trust to accommodate Mr. Seymour's necessities, though I had urged them to it. But now, on his assuring me that a certain sum would make him easy and save him from arrest, I prevailed on them to give it up, as it was very certain I had much more now than I could ever want, and secured in such a manner that it could not be squandered except by my own extravagance.

"They were convinced, and yielded to my wishes: but I would not, for his own sake, let him have at one time more money than his absolute necessities required.

"My story, I am happy to say, is now

rawing to a conclusion, and I have only
ne more incident to relate.

"I was walking one morning, with a
rvant behind me, on a shopping expe-
tion to a linen-draper's whom I always
ıployed; but seeing that a shower of
n was coming on, I went into a shop
ich I was passing, and resolved to buy
at I wanted there.

'In the shop was a young lady, attended
a nurse and child, who was so young
so beautiful, and so every way at-
tive in appearance, that I gazed on
with wonder and admiration. And
n desired to say what I wanted, I sat
n in a chair, and said I would wait
that lady was served (for indeed I
ed for leisure to gaze on her at my
). This produced from her a sweet
e and a courteous bow of the head:
:hen turning round, she caressed the
, who appeared about two years old:
found to my surprise that it was her

own, for she did not look more than seventeen. 'It is a sweet boy,' said I.

"'It is mine,' said she smiling.

"'But not at all like you, though it is very handsome.'"

"'He is the image of his father,' she replied; and went on with her purchase.

"I meanwhile was playing with the little boy, and attracting him to me by the gold chain and other ornaments which I wore: and as he looked up in my face, I wondered who the father could be whom he so much resembled, for the eyes seemed familiar to me.

"The rain was now falling in torrents: I therefore sent my servant for my carriage; and the lady having completed her purchases, desired them to be sent to her house. 'What name, madam?' asked the shopman, while I listened attentively. 'Mrs. Sedley Seymour,' she replied; and some number, and some street; but I heard no more. A sad sus-

picion came over my mind: I thought I had at last discovered my rival, and discovered her bearing my name as well as enjoying my rights.

"The shopman saw that I turned very pale; and fearing I was going to faint, the woman serving behind the counter led me into an inner room in which there was a sofa; while the unconscious usurper of my name gave them a bottle of salts for my use. But summoning all my energy to my aid I conquered the weakness; and though I threw myself on the sofa I did not faint, but lay revolving in my mind every possible reason for believing that there might be another Sedley Seymour, though the name was peculiar, and I had often heard my husband say he believed there was no one living of the same name as himself:—still he might be mistaken; and it was impossible for me to believe that the fair young and innocent looking mother before me, was not as innocent as she seemed.

"'But I will sift this matter to the bottom,' thought I. Yet the next moment I doubted whether I should be justified in thus surprising my husband's secrets, supposing that my fears were just. A feeling, however, which carried all else before it urged me to make every discovery possible: and being quite recovered, I returned into the shop. The unconscious cause of my illness met me, and inquired concerning my health with the kindest accents. This, and the sight of the child, who now appeared to me the image of Mr. Seymour, nearly overcame me again. My carriage had by this time arrived; and having made up my mind how to act, I offered (as the rain still continued) to set the fair stranger down. But she refused, on pretence of trouble, crowding, my illness, &c. as I knew she would. I was however determined to carry my point, and I did carry it.—She

ed at the top of Upper Baker-street:

as soon as we were in the coach I tried

summon up resolution to ask certain
essary questions, as ' Is that your
st child?'—" 'O yes, I have not been
ried three years.'
'Married! I repeated to myself; and
iopes revived. 'I should not think,'
ed I, by your look, that you could
been married so long.'
O yes, and engaged much longer;
was engaged before I was fifteen,
iould have been married then, but
sband, who was recruiting in Wales
I lived, was only a lieutenant of
ns and had no money, and I had
ien.'
what regiment was your husband?'
e named Mr. Seymour's.
iad her salts still in my hand: and
l I had, for they saved me from
iinting again.
is hard,' said I, 'when poverty
two persons, who love each other,
rrying.'

"'It is indeed,' she answered. 'But luckily, three years ago, just after my father died and my brother went to India, I had a handsome fortune left me; so I wrote to my lover, and he came down and married me. I assure you I was very glad to see him, for I had seen in the newspaper the marriage of Sedley Seymour, Esq. to a Miss Fortescue, and I was afraid it was he.'

"'Indeed!' cried I, feeling my head turn round.

"'Yes, and I said so in my letter; but he told me when he came down that it was an uncle of his, who had married a great beauty and a great heiress.'

"O how little could she have been able to discover the *great beauty* in the poor, pale, meagre, trembling being before her! How I kept my senses I know not; but I did keep them, though I could doubt the horrid truth no longer.

"Yet I have thought that two con-

tions supported me, and assuaged
misery:—the one was, that perhaps
want of a certain sum of money, as
ch, or even more than love, prompted
mour to marry this unhappy girl, who
, by writing to him, thrown the temp-
on in his way;—the other was, that he
not seduced her, and that she was
in the sight of Heaven, and in-
of man, as innocent as if she had
seen him.

Yes—great as was his guilt towards
nd towards me, I felt a degree of
olation in this last thought, which
s would not have bought of me.

As soon as I had learnt from her all
ted to know,—and her voluble sim-
made my task so far easy,—I com-
d of being ill, (which indeed was
the case,) as an excuse for sinking
tal silence, that I might decide how
me me to act on this most trying
on of my life;—for what can equal

the agony of finding that the object on whom you have doted is utterly despicable, utterly unworthy of your love?

"Sometimes it appeared to me that I should do a cruel action in withdrawing the veil that hid this poor woman's real situation from her; for while she believed herself a wife, she was innocent; but then, if I did not enlighten her on this subject, I was conniving at my husband's continuing to live in the commission of crime. And now she was an innocent woman only: if, when told the truth, she instantly resolved to leave him, then she would become a virtuous one, and this it was my duty to give her an opportunity of being. But when I recollected that I must cloud over that fair and open brow with conscious shame, my heart died within me; and I felt this the hardest task and the severest trial whichh the vices of my husband had been the means of imposing upon me.

"At length we reached her house; and
ıding me still very ill, she asked me to
ght, a civility which I expected, and
ıich I had determined to accept. Let
: own my weakness. Since I knew who
: father was, the sight of the child, who
opposite to me, was nearly insupport-
e to me, by recalling a number of
rwhelming recollections, and I fre-
ntly closed my eyes that I might shut
him.

While the poor innocent, unconscious
he blow that awaited her, was gone
rocure me some lavender drops, I
ed round the room, which was neatly,
gaily furnished; and the first thing
met my view was a picture of Mr.
ıour. It was so like him, so like him
his best expression, that I resolved
) look at it again, as I wished to re-
t him only as his mind and temper
him appear in my presence, and I
l to other objects. The poor Emily
hat was her name) now re-entere

the room. I took the drops, and she seated herself beside me.

"'Our house is small,' said she, 'but we keep no company; my husband's connexions and family are superior to his fortune; and as he could not afford to give entertainments in return, he does not introduce me to any one, but neither owns nor conceals his marriage; and so as I do but see him I am happy. But, alas! I see very little of him: he has a place which takes up much of his time, and he has also an old uncle out of town, to whom he is forced to pay constant attention; so that he seldom spends more than two whole days in a week with me; and those are Saturday and Sunday.' I instantly remembered that he always told me he went into the country on those days to the house of Lord N. To what falsehoods and what base acts was he thus continually forced to have recourse, to deceive and satisfy even this unsuspecting creature! How my heart bled for her, while I almost

execrated her destroyer! And who was he? Dread thought! he was my husband! Yet, amidst all her wrongs, I was not sure that a lurking weakness in my heart did not make me envy her; for he loved her—always had loved her; and she probably was a stranger to those dreadful proofs of uncontrolled temper which had made my life wretched:—*Had* made—for *at that moment* I resolved never to live with him again, but abandon him to the narrow income which his crimes deserved.

"The morning was now wearing away, and yet I wanted courage to perform the dreadful office that awaited me. But in silence and in sadness, and in deep humility of spirit, I lifted up my heart to Him who could alone support and guide me; and when I again took my hand from my face, it was with a determination to go through my duty immediately. 'See, that is my husband's picture!' said the poor Emily; giving it into my hand (for

it was a miniature) with pride and pleasure.

"'I see it is Mr. Seymour's picture,' I coldly replied.

"'What! did you then ever see him?'

"'Yes, I have seen him; and I regret the hour when I first saw him:—but still more for your sake, dear unconscious victim, do I regret the hour when *you* first saw him; and I, alas! must teach you to regret it also.'

"I believe the poor thing thought me insane; and alarming as that fear was, it was comfort to the feelings which succeeded it.

"She still held the picture. I took it from her; I looked at it, and burst into an agony of tears. They did me good, and I was soon able to proceed. 'You told me this was the picture of *your husband.* I replied, 'I see it is the picture Mr. Seymour.'—Did you not mark something evasive in my reply?'

"A *no* faltered on her lips; she was too much agitated to speak plainly.

"'I meant, dear deluded INNOCENT,—for such you are, and remember it to your consolation,—that it was the picture of Mr. Seymour, not of *your husband*; for he is *mine—my* husband. I was the Miss Fortescue whom Sedley Seymour married; and he has no uncle.'

"I cannot describe the expression of her countenance when I said this! She fixed her eyes on me with a wild stare, and then with a sort of mad laugh exclaimed, 'No, no—no—no—that's impossible!'

"'Well it were,' replied I in emotion nearly equal to her own: 'but you know his hand-writing, therefore read this and be convinced.'—So saying, I put the following note into her hand, which I happened to have in my pocket, showing her the address first.

"'I shall not dine at home to-day

Louisa; but I mean to attend your assembly this evening with Lord and Lady Nelvin.'

"She read—she heaved a few hysterical sobs, and I received her senseless in my arms.

"The suspension, the happy suspension of life as I may call it, was only temporary; and never shall I forget the look of woe with which she opened her eyes and gazed on me! Then, hiding her face, she fell at my feet, and embracing my knees begged me to forgive her.

"'Forgive thee! my poor child,' said I, tenderly embracing her: 'What pardon hast thou to ask? Unconsciously thou hast invaded my rights: and I re repeat—Remember, you are INNOCENT; and if you are capable of being VIRTUOUS also, I will be your friend, your mother, and a mother to your infant: I have the *means*, and I have the *will* to *save* and *protect* you!'

"'Then I must leave him—never see him more, I suppose?' she cried with a scream of phrensy; and a long and terrible paroxysm succeeded.

"Painful would it have been to me to witness such an one at any time, and in any human being;—but to think that my husband occasioned it—rendered me nearly wild myself.

"Not to be tedious, let me add, that when she became composed, I again told her that if she continued to live with Seymour after what she had heard, she would cease to be innocent, and would deserve to forfeit mine and every one's respect; but that, if she had resolution to leave her betrayer she would then be virtuous,—and so virtuous, that every one who knew her story would delight to praise her and to befriend her.

"She owned the truth of all I said, but doubted her resolution: and at length she conjured me to take her and her child

away directly, and hide them from Seymour for ever; for if she saw him again, she was sure she should not have the heart to leave him.

"How I felt for this child of unaffected nature! How tender were the tears I shed over her! I forgot she was my rival, and I believe she forgot that I was hers; or rather that while I lived she could not be a wife; she seemed to remember nothing of me but that she had injured me, and that I forgave her.

"Her proposal, if feasible, I was desirous to comply with; and was considering whither I could take her, when we heard a hasty step on the stairs—and Seymour burst into the room. On seeing him Emily screamed, and hid her face in my bosom; while I, bold in innocence, and proud to be thus chosen as the protector of injured innocence, awaited his approach with a firm and unvarying countenance.

" He was seemingly awed a moment, and lost his, usually, undaunted air and manner.

" 'So, madam,' he at length exclaimed, 'is this well done of you, to keep spies upon my actions, and force yourself into a house that calls me master? Here, madam, at least I am independent of a mean and treacherous wife, and I can rid myself of an object that is odious to me. Go, I command you, hence! on the obedience which you owe me, and which you pretend to pay.'

" 'After what I now know of you, Mr. Seymour,' replied I with a firm voice and look, though my tongue was parched with emotion, 'your presence, sir, is to me as odious as mine has long been to you. Your brutal violence of temper I could bear,—for lately at least it has injured only myself; but your profligate destruction of this lovely innocent I cannot forgive—I cannot excuse.'

"'No!' exclaimed he, 'cannot her excelling beauty excuse it? Look on her, madam. In what is she not your superior, except in fortune? And *she* does not make the wills of doting old men, to render the man whom she pretends to love a dependent on her caprice. Yes, madam, in every thing but fortune she is your superior—in youth, in beauty, in goodness of heart;—and she is as free from stain as you are; aye, and but for you she would have continued happy, for she loves me, and I dote on her; yes, but for you we had been happy still. Hark ye, madam, as some reparation for the cursed trick which you have now played me, do me one favour.'

"'Name it.'

"'Die, madam—die!' he exclaimed with frantic earnestness and the look of a demon; 'Die! that I may make that angel amends for all she is now suffering, by making her legally my wife.'

"I thought I had already gone through the worst of my sufferings: but to hear the being for whom I had sacrificed so much, and suffered so much, desire me, as the only favour I could do him, to die, that he might marry another—nearly drove me to a desperation equal to his own; and even the woe-worn Emily exclaimed, 'Shame! shame on you, Seymour!'

"'I will save you, sir,' said I after a long struggle with myself, and speaking with effort, 'I will save you from the further guilt of ruffian treatment like this: I leave it to that lady to explain why I am here, and how. Sir, while enumerating the advantages which that much-injured being has over me, you omitted the greatest in my eyes—that she is *not your wife*.'

"So saying, I left the room: and Seymour, who had never seen me show any thing like spirit before, seemed confounded at this exertion of it; and I went

the room. I took the drops, and she seated herself beside me.

"'Our house is small,' said she, 'but we keep no company; my husband's connexions and family are superior to his fortune; and as he could not afford to give entertainments in return, he does not introduce me to any one, but neither owns nor conceals his marriage; and so as I do but see him I am happy. But, alas! I see very little of him: he has a place which takes up much of his time, and he has also an old uncle out of town, to whom he is forced to pay constant attention; so that he seldom spends more than two whole days in a week with me; and those are Saturday and Sunday.' I instantly remembered that he always told me he went into the country on those days to the house of Lord N. To what falsehoods and what base acts was he thus continually forced to have recourse, to deceive and satisfy even this unsuspecting creature! How my heart bled for her, while I almost

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and maternal side, to two noble families; and he insisted that I should never go out without outriders and four horses, and that I should have a groom of the chamber, servants for the baths, and a set of rowers for my barge; in short, every thing in the highest style possible.

"I was glad to live at the Lawn-house: but it was painful to me to assume that state which he required of me; and I was sorry that he could suppose, as I conclude he did, that grandeur could make me amends for the want of domestic happiness. However, as you saw, I have obeyed him *à la lettre*; and in the recovered society of those early friends whom I neglected, to please my husband; in the duties which my great wealth entailed on me; and in the cultivation of my mind, and the little talents I possess, I am become, compared to what I have been, happy.

"But never can I forget the deplorable error which I made in the choice of a hus-

band; never forgive myself my determined preference of a man like Sedley Seymour!

"It was not only my perseverance in an attachment which my parents disapproved, that weighed heavily on my conscience; but it was my own want of a proper moral sense and of virtuous delicacy in not feeling, when I heard from indisputable authority that Seymour was a man of immoral habits, that *purity* cannot have any sympathy with *impurity*, and that *innocence* ought to *shrink* from any intimate association with *vice*.

"Seymour might be belied, his faults might be exaggerated; but even he himself did not deny that his temper was bad and his conduct dissolute. Then how could a girl of moral habits and religious restraints think herself justified in intrusting the guardianship of her happiness to a man of a most detestable temper; and of her morals and her religion to a sceptical and notorious profligate!

unimpeded to my carriage. But when I reached home, the servants found me in a swoon at the bottom of the coach; nor was I able to leave my bed for two days. Seymour did not come home during the time, and I was very anxious to know whether that time was passed with Emily.

"At the end of the third day he returned, and burst into my room like a man devoid of reason. 'Where have you hidden her? Whither have you taken Emily and my child?' he cried. 'Give them back to me, or take the consequences!' And as he said this he grasped my arm till I shrieked aloud with agony.

"'Has she then left you?—Noble girl!' I exclaimed in a transport of joy.

"'You know she has, accursed hypocrite!—and tell me where she is this moment.'

"'You know me to be no hypocrite,'

I replied, 'and that neither my woe nor my joy is ever feigned. If she has left your protection I rejoice, and I honour her; and all I regret is, that she has *not fled to me*.'

"'Am I to believe then,' said he, turning very pale, 'that she has left me, and has not flown to you? Then am I more wretched than before,—for what, O what, can have become of her!'

"'What, indeed!' repeated I. And Seymour, assured by my manner that I was as much alarmed as himself, left me with the same impetuosity as marked his entrance.

"The next morning by the two-penny post I received a note in a hand which I did not know. I opened it, and found with delight that it was signed 'Emily.'

"It was dated from an obscure lodging in the Borough, and it claimed the protection for her and her child which I had promised her.

"My resolution was instantly taken, and my plan laid. I ordered a post-chaise to meet me on Blackfriars-bridge, whither I drove in my own coach, taking my own maid with me. There I dismissed it, and got into the chaise, desiring it to drive me to Flint's on Fish-street-hill. When there, I ordered the chaise to Emily's lodgings. As soon as she saw me, she threw herself into my arms.

"'You and virtue have conquered,' said she; 'but Oh! I have suffered much. While he remained with me after you left us, I thought I could never leave him; and I promised not to forsake him, though it was become wicked in me to live with him now; and on the strength of my assurances he went into the country to some races. But better feelings gained ascendancy over me; and before he returned I was gone.—And now *do* take me where I shall never see him again!'

"I told her I was come for that purpose. And I took her and her child to a retired and pleasant seat of mine, which I inherited from Mr. Arlington, about ten miles from Lovelands; but so secluded that no one going along the high road could imagine there was a house near. And there, on pretence that she was a friend of mine in ill health, to whom change of air was necessary, I left her settled, as I hope, for life. Before we parted, I engaged servants to wait on her, and told her that I would allow her an income equal to her own fortune, which, I had no doubt, had been entirely wasted; and that I would settle a fortune on her child.

"In three days, having seen her tolerably composed, I went to the Lawn-House with a lightened heart; and thither I had ordered my carriage, in which I returned to London.

"'So, madam,' said Seymour when

he saw me, which was not till a week after my return, 'this is the way in which you virtuous wives behave, is it? You leave home unknown to your husband, and are absent for days without his knowing where you are!'

"'Under most circumstances such conduct would, I know, be wrong,' said I; 'but those I acted under were so imperious that I could not do otherwise than I have done: and remember, that I did not go alone;—I made a highly respected servant the witness of my conduct and the companion of my journey.—Have you heard of your Emily, sir?'

"'No; and I am very uneasy:—Have you?'

"'I have. She applied to me for protection after I last saw you; and I have protected her, and will protect her from you.'

"'Where is she?'

'I not tell you I would protect

her from you?—Then how can I tell you where she is?'

"'I will know.'

"'Never! from *me*.'

"I will not relate all that passed: but I thought I perceived, spite of his violence, that he was relieved of a burthen; and that provided he could but see her now and then, (and he hoped to find out her abode,) he was very glad to have her maintained by another.

"'And you have really undertaken to maintain her and the child?' said he: 'I hope you do it handsomely:—she is a gentlewoman, Louisa, and has had the education and the fortune of one.'

"'Handsomely! Do you doubt it?'

"'No, on my honour, I do not,' he replied with more feeling than I ever saw in him before: 'No, Louisa, no; I do you justice; and I believe that the allowance is far, far beyond what any one but yourself would think sufficient.'

"'In what I have done,' replied I, 'I have sought the approbation of my own conscience, and that is enough; but let me tell you, to put your heart entirely at rest, that if I die to-morrow—' here my voice faltered, from recollection of his wishing me to die—'your child will have a sufficient fortune, and his mother will be no mean heiress to her husband.'

"The look he gave me at this moment is almost the only look of his which, since we married, I can recollect with pleasure. Tears filled his eyes, as he gazed on me mournfully, tenderly, and reverentially I may say:—then snatching my hand to his lips, he rushed out of the room.

"It was our last meeting!—I saw him no more!

"He went, I understand, that night to the gaming-table, and remained there till the second night; when, having lost all that he played for, in an evil hour he used some gentleman's name improperly, in

a money transaction, of which indeed I chose never to hear an explanation;—but it was, in some way or other, a dishonourable transaction, and he was forced to fly the country.

"Shocked as I was at the cause, I was rejoiced by the effect; we were now separated without any painful exertion of mine; I was at liberty to live for myself and the pursuits I loved; and was no longer hanging for joy, or grief, on the smiles and frowns of a tyrant. The first use I made of my liberty was to remove to the Lawn-House, and quit London entirely.

"All that I could do for my unhappy husband I did; and the income which I derived from the fortune my father left me, abroad as well as here, I no sooner received than I transmitted it to him.

"He often entreated me to relax in my rigour, and let him know where

Emily resided, as he could not distress her now by his visits. But I knew he would try to prevail on her by letter to come over and cheer his exile, and I wished to preserve her from all temptation.

"She was, however, fortified against it, in a way I little expected;—she had had a most religious and virtuous education, and it was her piety which enabled her to resist the pleadings of her heart.

"As soon as it was known that Seymour had left England, and that I was not to be the sharer of his exile,—a sacrifice which even he did not dare to ask of me, after my knowledge of his real character—Mr. Arlington's executor put a letter into my hand, which he was desired to give me, only in case I was ever separated from my husband.

"I was now separated from him, and the letter was, consequently, given me. Mr. Arlington's letter began by requiring that I should drop the name of Seymour,

and assume that of Arlington; a requisition with which I was not sorry to comply. It went on to advise, that when I was placed in that situation, the most dangerous, as he said, to a young and beautiful woman, (and I was then only twenty-seven,) viz. separation from a profligate husband, I should retire from the world of London, and live at the Lawn House, or at any other of my seats. That in order to make me amends for quitting London, he had tried to convert the Lawn House into the abode of every means of amusement, and had therefore built a music-room, a banqueting-room, and a theatre, and had given me in perfection the eastern and Turkish luxury of baths according to the best model.

"He also begged, as he was fond of pomp and show, and had been accustomed to Indian splendour, that I would always keep up a state equal to my fortune, and becoming my relationship, on the paternal

and maternal side, to two noble families; and he insisted that I should never go out without outriders and four horses, and that I should have a groom of the chamber, servants for the baths, and a set of rowers for my barge; in short, every thing in the highest style possible.

"I was glad to live at the Lawn-house: but it was painful to me to assume that state which he required of me; and I was sorry that he could suppose, as I conclude he did, that grandeur could make me amends for the want of domestic happiness. However, as you saw, I have obeyed him *à la lettre*; and in the recovered society of those early friends whom I neglected, to please my husband; in the duties which my great wealth entailed on me; and in the cultivation of my mind, and the little talents I possess, I am become, compared to what I have been, happy.

"But never can I forget the deplorable
which I made in the choice of a hus-

try—but with sentiments of the deepest commiseration." And he went on to say, that though Mrs. Arlington did not express much on the subject, he was convinced that she felt a great deal; and he earnestly hoped that before Mr. Seymour died, and his life would probably not be long, his wife might have the satisfaction of knowing that he repented of his sins.

"O dear papa, if he could but hear you preach!" cried Mary Ann, "and preach that sermon 'on calling sinners to repentance!'"

Derville could not help smiling at Mary Ann's high idea of his powers as a preacher; and her observation certainly did not lessen the fervour of her mother's kiss, as she desired her to go to bed directly, for it was past eleven o'clock.

"Past eleven o'clock, mamma, and I still up! What will Mrs. Arlington say when she hears it?" Then, with her little heart full of pity for Mrs. Arlington's trials, and of self-importance to think

"But my fault had brought its punishment along with it;—and while I admitted, I humbly and patiently bowed beneath this striking instance of retributive justice.

"Little now remains to be told, except that poor Emily, whom I frequently see here, or at her own house, has lost her child; an event which, under the circumstances of his birth, I have tried to convince her, was not greatly to be deplored. She has engaged the affections of a worthy young man with a good fortune, in her neighbourhood, who knows her story, and whom she thinks, under other circumstances, she could like; but while Seymour lives she is resolved never to marry.

"And he does live, though in exile; lives too, I fear, in a way which virtue cannot approve; and which, therefore, keeps up constantly in me that pain of mind which I felt at first learning of his dreadful devia-

"London.

"WHEN you receive the memorial of your absent friend, which this accompanies, I shall be on my road to my poor husband. He has had a fit; and I am informed by a friend on whom I can depend, that he is in a declining state, and has removed from the neighbourhood of Paris to Boulogne, for the benefit of the sea air. He adds also that he is living there in poor lodgings, and has not good attendance. You will suppose therefore that I have not hesitated one moment to set off for Boulogne. I shall take a house, and give the invalid an invitation to remove to it if he chooses. Farewell! All good attend you!

"Your kind letters beguiled me of no unpleasing tears; you all felt and wrote as I knew you would, and wished you should, feel and write; and I wear in 'my heart's core' dear Mary Ann's assurance that she would now never go to

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"And he does live, though in exile; lives too, I fear, in a way which virtue cannot approve; and which, therefore, keeps up constantly in me that pain of mind which I felt at first learning of his dreadful devia-

ions from moral rectitude. But we have now been separated three years; and time, which insensibly has weakened my affection for him, gradually will weaken my sorrow for his sin.

"He sometimes writes to me, and now he rarely mentions Emily; but his last letter was written in such a tone of despondency, that if he wishes to see me, I intend to go over to him.

"Now, dear Mrs. Derville, can you wonder that I was wounded at your hesitating to return, for any empty pleasure which I could offer you, to such a husband as yours? Can you wonder that my eye reproved you, when I also found that beloved husband expected you? And can you be surprised, when I tell you that I would exchange all my possessions, large as they are, for such a home as yours?

"From the indulgence of virtuous *affections*, and from them *alone*, can flow the happiness of life; and mine, all glowing as

they are, have been thrown back upon my heart, to consume it with its own fires.

"Before I conclude, let me assure you, that though I wished, when I discovered certain feelings in you, to tell you the real situation of the woman whom you envied, and to show you the *dessous des cartes*, I could not prevail on myself to unveil my husband's faults so completely to any one, and I resolved to forbear. But when I beheld you afterwards as the preserver of my life, I felt it to be my duty to show my gratitude to you in the most effective way possible; and I humbly hope that, in my earnest endeavour to do my duty by you, I have not violated the duty which is owing even to an unworthy husband. But it is only under the seal of the strictest secrecy that I give you this narrative; and when you have read it to your husband and your family, find some opportunity to return it to me again.

"LOUISA ARLINGTON."

It was not without many interruptions that Derville read this manuscript. Mrs. Derville was affected even to agony at some of the sufferings of her friend; and often was the narrative laid down, while Derville indulged himself in expressions of wonder that there could be such a husband—"and to such a woman," added his son.—And when it was ended, Mrs. Derville wept long and uncontrolledly, not so much for Mrs. Arlington's unhappiness, as for the thankless unconsciousness of her own happiness, which she had herself displayed.

But in the midst of her self-upbraidings, she was consoled by the hope that her generous friend had not admonished in vain; that the remedy was efficacious, and the cure complete; and that if Mrs. Arlington owed her life to her, she was likely to owe a much greater obligation to Mrs. Arlington—the security of her domestic happiness.

"Well, Frederic," said Mrs. Derville, "and what do you think of Mrs. Arlington now?"

"Think of her? That she had better not come to Lovelands," he replied (wishing to hide a great deal of deeply awakened feeling under a little veil of pleasantry).

"Better not come to Lovelands!" they all exclaimed. "Why not?"

"Lest I should fall in love with her; and then, perhaps, in humble imitation of her amiable husband, I should probably say to you, Anna, 'Die, madam, die! as the only favour you can now do me!'"

"Dear papa, I am sure you could not be so wicked!" cried Mary Ann.

"No, dear child, no; I trust I could not; and I was only joking: but it was a bad joke; and indeed I think the dreadful state of this wretched Mr. Seymour's mind and feelings, is not to be thought of with any feeling like pleasan-

try—but with sentiments of the deepest commiseration." And he went on to say, that though Mrs. Arlington did not express much on the subject, he was convinced that she felt a great deal; and he earnestly hoped that before Mr. Seymour died, and his life would probably not be long, his wife might have the satisfaction of knowing that he repented of his sins.

"O dear papa, if he could but hear you preach!" cried Mary Ann, "and preach that sermon 'on calling sinners to repentance!'"

Derville could not help smiling at Mary Ann's high idea of his powers as a preacher; and her observation certainly did not lessen the fervour of her mother's kiss, as she desired her to go to bed directly, for it was past eleven o'clock.

"Past eleven o'clock, mamma, and I still up! What will Mrs. Arlington say when she hears it?" Then, with her little heart full of pity for Mrs. Arlington's trials, and of self-importance to think

she had had a secret intrusted to her which she must impart to no one, Mary Ann went to her chamber for the first time in her life in a slow foot's pace.

Sally was surprised, and asked if she was unwell; but Mary Ann consequentially replied, "No—only thoughtful:" and as she saw she had excited Sally's curiosity, she was good-naturedly sorry that she could not impart to her usual confidante all the interesting things she had heard.

The next day they all wrote to Mrs. Arlington; but Mrs. Derville's letter was blotted with many *precious tears*, as her kind monitor thought them.

That evening brought a hamper from London directed for Mrs. Derville, containing a breakfast set, and a duplicate of every convenience for the table and in the breakfast-room, which Mrs. Derville had admired at the Lawn-House; and with it came the following letter from Mrs. Arlington, dated

"London.

"WHEN you receive the memorial of your absent friend, which this accompanies, I shall be on my road to my poor husband. He has had a fit; and I am informed by a friend on whom I can depend, that he is in a declining state, and has removed from the neighbourhood of Paris to Boulogne, for the benefit of the sea air. He adds also that he is living there in poor lodgings, and has not good attendance. You will suppose therefore that I have not hesitated one moment to set off for Boulogne. I shall take a house, and give the invalid an invitation to remove to it if he chooses. Farewell! All good attend you!

"Your kind letters beguiled me of no unpleasing tears; you all felt and wrote as I knew you would, and wished you should, feel and write; and I wear in 'my heart's core' dear Mary Ann's assurance that she would now never go to

sleep till she had prayed God to bless and comfort poor dear Mrs. Arlington.

"Once more farewell! I will write to you as soon as I am landed.

"Ever your grateful

"L. A."

She kept her word, and Mrs. Derville received the following letter, dated

"Boulogne.

"My journey was short, my voyage prosperous, and I am here in the largest house I could procure, and in the most airy situation possible. By this time my husband knows I am at Boulogne; and while I am writing to you, I am anxiously awaiting the result. I hear he is very ill, and ordered to the South of France as soon as he can be moved.

"It will gratify you to learn that I have most unexpectedly met at Boulogne some distant relations of my mother, and once dear friends of mine—Lady Arling-

ton and her daughters. Her younger son, now her only one, is also here:—they are on their way to Paris and to Rome; but will not proceed while Mr. Seymour is in his present state.

"My ambassador to my poor husband is returned. He was, I find, much affected at hearing of my arrival, and at receiving my message. He accepts my invitation, and I am now going to superintend his removal hither. Oh, what an interview! and what new trials await me!

"Pray for me, Mr. Derville! pray for me! I will write again in a day or two.

"L. A."

Her next letter ran thus:—

"Do not expect me to describe our first meeting! I cannot do it. Such a change in his appearance! Old! emaciated! wan!

"We moved him at last without much inconvenience to himself, and I had the

comfort to see that he was dissatisfied with every one's suggestions and management but mine. Still this little pleasure was soon forgotten in a great pain which he inflicted.

"When he was settled in my house, and laid in his new and comfortable bed, he called me to him, and said,

"'I suppose, Louisa, you wish me to believe you came hither only on my account?'

"'I never wish you to believe what is false—you know I do not; and I did come hither merely on your account.'

"'O fie!—Do you pretend to tell me you did not know Sir Henry Arlington was here?'—(Sir H. Arlington is that early lover of mine, whom I mentioned to you.)

"'I did not know it:—but I am ashamed,' I added, 'of you for asking such a question, and of myself for deigning to reply to it. You know enough of

me to be sure that I came hither merely on your account, and that Sir Henry Arlington is the last man whom I should have sought.'

"At this moment, sent for by my husband I found, Sir Henry Arlington entered the room, and but for my earnest entreaties he would have told him his suspicions and my answer: however, he did for once obey me; but he talked *at* us during Sir Henry's whole visit. No proof this of any improvement in his temper and feelings; but I expect some good to result from his daily intercourse with my excellent relation. He is always wishing for Sir Henry to be with him; and for rational piety and powers of arguing I know not his equal, and I feel less wretched than I did. Farewell! My next will tell you we are going to Nice, or that ALL IS OVER.

"Yours ever,"

The phrase 'all is over' was written in an almost illegible hand, and blotted with a tear. Soon after came another letter, beginning—

"*All is over*—but do not ask particulars of a scene which, though I can never forget, I can never describe! Still it had for me much of comfort. Such remorse! such an agonized consciousness of his own cruelty to me, and my forbearance! Oh, may that Being whom he so long and deeply offended, forgive him as I have done!

"It will be long ere you and I meet again, my dear friends; for my health is delicate, and requires milder air, and my mind wants the relief of change of scene. I shall therefore accompany Lady Arlington and her daughters to Rome; and remain *en attendant* with Fanny Arlington in the neighbourhood of Paris, till the rest

try—but with sentiments of the deepest commiseration." And he went on to say, that though Mrs. Arlington did not express much on the subject, he was convinced that she felt a great deal; and he earnestly hoped that before Mr. Seymour died, and his life would probably not be long, his wife might have the satisfaction of knowing that he repented of his sins.

"O dear papa, if he could but hear you preach!" cried Mary Ann, "and preach that sermon 'on calling sinners to repentance!'"

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"Past eleven o'clock, mamma, and I still up! What will Mrs. Arlington say when she hears it?" Then, with her little heart full of pity for Mrs. Arlington's trials, and of self-importance to think

is one of those losses which I have heard you call gains!"

"It is so to Mrs. Arlington, certainly;—but then she has, my dear, a painful habit of thinking of the interests of others as well as of her own; and I am sure that she would have wished it had been the will of Providence, that her erring husband had been spared for years of penitence and amendment. Besides, under its best circumstances, a death-bed is an awful and affecting scene; and as the final separation even of those who have not lived in love, though connected by the closest ties, is a trying moment, it is evident from this poor lady's letter, that the death-bed scene of her husband was a trial to her indeed—looking back as she must have done to his progress through this world, and forward for him to the world to come.—Therefore, Mary Ann, I repeat my epithet of 'Poor

" London.

" WHEN you receive the memorial of your absent friend, which this accompanies, I shall be on my road to my poor husband. He has had a fit; and I am informed by a friend on whom I can depend, that he is in a declining state, and has removed from the neighbourhood of Paris to Boulogne, for the benefit of the sea air. He adds also that he is living there in poor lodgings, and has not good attendance. You will suppose therefore that I have not hesitated one moment to set off for Boulogne. I shall take a house, and give the invalid an invitation to remove to it if he chooses. Farewell! All good attend you!

" Your kind letters beguiled me of no unpleasing tears; you all felt and wrote as I knew you would, and wished you should, feel and write; and I wear in 'my heart's core' dear Mary Ann's assurance that she would now never go to

quaintance really deserving of her, I should be glad to hear that she was married again."

"I should be glad also to see her again," said Mrs. Derville, "and I shall think it long till she returns from Italy."

And had she been a less happy woman Mrs. Derville would have found the time long indeed; for a twelvemonth passed away, and still Mrs. Arlington remained abroad; and though she wrote twice or thrice during that period, she did not talk of returning; while every letter betokened increasing cheerfulness.

Mrs. Derville meanwhile had experienced a conscious improvement in her manner of considering her lot in life, and every thing which surrounded her, in consequence of the contrast which she had been enabled to draw between her humble sphere of worldly action and Mrs. Arlington's splendid state, and her happi-

ess was increased also by the birth of another son.

But though Mrs. Derville had not only ceased to wish for improvements in the furniture and decorations of the parsonage, and was ever eager to express her entire contentment, her attentive and grateful husband had not forgotten her wishes; and he was the more willing to remember them, when he found she had forgotten them herself.

Accordingly a cart stopped at the door one day, laden with packages, just arrived by the waggon from London, which were all directed to Mrs. Derville.

"Some new proof, I suppose," said she, "of Mrs. Arlington's grateful remembrance; but I had rather she had sent me word that she was coming home, and hither."

Derville smiled, and assisted to unpack the goods. They consisted of a set of neat light small mahogany chairs with

leather bottoms, fitted for a dining-room, and meant to replace the large and heavy ones of which Mrs. Derville had complained; and a pair of *chaises longues*, to replace the cumbrous sofa. There were also curtains and a carpet proper for a dining-room.

Mrs. Derville was gratified at the supposed attention of her new friend, though her pride was a little wounded at a second obligation of this nature; and she beheld the handsome gift with feelings almost quiet enough to disappoint her husband.

"Well, Anna," said he, "do you not admire these pretty things, that you say so little?"

"O yes! they are all that I could have wished for; but I do not like to receive so many expensive presents, and from the same person—Mrs Arlington does too much to oblige me."

"Is Mrs. Arlington then the *only* person living, Anna, who wishes to give

pleasure, that you fancy every present every attention to your wants must e from *her?*"

he tone of gentle reproach in which was uttered, corrected by the smile of id affection, instantly explained the ı to the now delighted Mrs. Derville; countenance lighted up with the live- joy, and with eyes sparkling through s she exclaimed, "Oh! I understand l now! and the only drawback to my sure is, that you should have remem- d those moments of weakness in me h I had tried to make you forget."

I can never forget any thing you r say, Anna. The record of affec- is written on brass; and if they were nents of weakness they were very sable ones, and oh! how amply have been atoned for!"

his was a pleasure of the heart which rich Mrs. Arlington might have ied her poorer friend; and never did

she superintend the arrangement of any of her splendid furniture with half the delight which Mrs. Derville experienced while arranging those proofs of a *husband's love*. But I must own, that when the sofa was removed, whose merits, once forgotten and despised, her husband had so feelingly related and recalled, Mrs. Derville, overcome by a variety of recollections, burst into tears.

It was removed into Derville's study; and his wife assured him that she really believed she should still find it a more comfortable couch than her new one. "Very likely," he replied; "as a homely old friend, who has been endeared to us by the tender recollections of childhood, is often more welcome to us than the more brilliant friend of later years."

Mrs. Arlington had now been abroad a year and six months, and Lionel had returned to college for the second time; Eustace was old enough to take the living

d for him; and Jane and he were on point of marriage, when Mrs. Derville eived a letter from her absent friend, ed 'London!'

The date alone excited universal joy the family; but when the letter was d, it was impossible to make Mary Ann ep her transport in any bounds at first; it announced that Mrs. Arlington s coming to Lovelands! was coming, it was convenient to them, to stay a onth! and Mary Ann bounded out of e room to tell the conscious Sally, and en the unconscious Nelly, that Mrs. lington was coming! and coming to y a month!

But when the first feelings subsided, was not all joy to Mrs. Derville. She d a new baby, and was a nurse; and she as afraid that her increased avocations ould make it impossible for her to pro-de for Mrs. Arlington's accommoda-

tion, as well as she ought; and she began again to wish she had had this convenience and the other. But she soon laughed at this remnant of her former weakness; and remembering what sort of woman her guest was, she exclaimed aloud, though alone, "What folly! when I know Mrs. Arlington, and know that all she requires, or can value, will be cordial welcomes from hearts that love her!"

The day before she intended to come, Mrs. Arlington wrote to say that she would arrive the next evening, and all was happy preparation and expectation at Lovelands.

"It is very strange, but very true," said Derville to his wife and children, soon after the letter came, "that though you have all talked of Mrs. Arlington, and of her beauty, with unwearied eloquence and delight, you have never

ribed her person and face to me.
ı what style are they? For there are
y styles in beauty, you know."

I think," replied Mrs. Derville, "her
is quite Grecian; her head is beau-
y formed, her profile straight, and
lways wears her very long black hair,
ly dressed, *à l'antique*. She is very
and has the finest throat and shoul-
the finest bust I ever saw: but her
is thin, and she does not look happy,
her cheek is pale: but were she at
tter, or had she more colour, she
d not be near as attractive or as
esting to me as she is now."

No?" said Derville, looking at his
affectionately. "I have always con-
ed a fine bloom, and a look of health,
eat improvers of female beauty."

Oh, but Mrs. Arlington does not look
y, father," cried Jane. "She has
olour to be sure, yet she is not pale;

and though she is thin, somehow—she is *not* thin, father; and her eyes are so dark and beautiful!"

"Dark!" said her mother, "dark! They are gray, a blue gray in a strong light; and it is the full long black eye-lash that makes them seem dark."

"Miserable man that I am!" cried Derville in a most pathetic tone, "for it is very clear to me that this enchantress, Mrs. Arlington, has bewildered the senses of my poor wife and daughter, and thrown a spell over their power of vision. One says her eyes are dark, the other that they are light: then Jane talks of paleness, that is not pale—and thinness, that is not thin!"

"O papa! I know the right word," cried Mary Ann; "Mrs. Arlington is slender, but not lean."

"Well said, Mary Ann, and what height is she?"

O papa! she is very tall—yet, no, so very tall—not too tall, papa."

That is not so well said; for here is ıess, that is not tall; and the result our fine descriptions, ladies, is, that e able to decide what Mrs. Arlington I must see her; and I am happy to k she comes to-morrow."

)h! with what pleased yet anxious rity Mrs. Derville and Jane, with y Ann assisting, prepared and adorn- Mrs. Derville's room and dressing- n for her reception!

)ut all the preparations for her re- tion throughout the little domains of elands were not quite finished, and ı. Derville with her two daughters, not ecting Mrs. Arlington for an hour or , had walked into the village to bespeak plies from her neighbours, in case she ıted them,—when the guest arrived, Mr. Derville had to receive her alone.

She came without state, in a plain travelling carriage and post horses, and with only a man and maid.

Mr. Derville thought it rather awkward to have to introduce himself; but he felt it would be very necessary to say "I am Mr. Derville," if his wife and daughters had described him to Mrs. Arlington as ill as they had described her to him; for when he beheld a fattish, blooming, young and happy-looking woman, smiling as she drove up to the door, he could scarcely believe that he beheld the "pale," "slender," and "unhappy-looking" Mrs. Arlington; and as he gave her his hand to assist her to alight, after she said "I conclude I see Mr. Derville," a meaning smile played round his mouth, while he replied,

"Yes, madam; but I am not sure that you are Mrs. Arlington; all I can say is that I hope you are."

Mrs. Arlington blushed, and said, "I

pose you did not expect to see such
it, ruddy woman as I now am; but you
l rejoice to hear that what I have lost
delicacy, I have gained in happiness."
Derville's kind reply produced another
m his guest; and before the ladies re-
ned Mrs. Arlington almost fancied
: had known her host for years. At
gth Mrs. Derville, walking or rather
ming along, appeared in sight; for
: had seen the carriage wheels, and
ew her guest was arrived.

Derville ran out to meet her, while the
o girls bounded past him into the
use. "Poor Mrs. Arlington!" said he,
you will not know her!"

"What!" said Mrs. Derville, turning
le, "is she ill?"

"No; but she has lost all power to
arm and interest you. She has gained,
or woman, so much bloom and *embon-
int*, and looks so happy, and so bril-
ntly beautiful!" Mrs. Derville had no

time to reply; for Mrs. Arlington came out to meet her, with Mary Ann hanging on one arm and Jane on the other, and looking like her former self: for emotion on seeing Mrs. Derville, from the remembrance of former times, made her cheek pale, and filled her eye with tears.

Derville staid to witness the first meeting; then beckoning Jane and Mary Anne to follow them, he left the ladies alone.

The one had much to tell, and the other much to inquire; nay, both had inquiries to make; and Mrs. Arlington had delicacy of tact enough to know exactly the demands which the self-love of others has on our listening powers; and she could enter with kind readiness into the mother's feeling, when Mrs. Derville rose, and said—"I must show you my baby." Mrs. Derville had a great mind to ask what she thought of her husband?—but her courage failed

However, as if she had the power ivining her friend's wishes, and *true volence* has a sort of *divining power*, . Arlington said, unasked, " I am you were not here when I arrived, gave me an opportunity of becoming ıainted at once with your husband.— ıirable being!—His person, face and ıner are exactly what I could have ıed those of such a man to be.—Yes, ıe casket is, indeed, worthy of the ı which it holds."

I knew you would think so," fal- d out the delighted wife; and her was not chilled on hearing that baby was the pride of babies, and ı like its father.

\fter prayers, and before they sepa- d for the night, Mrs. Arlington said, ı a little blushing hesitation, " I ht to have confessed before I prayed, y that I am not going to confess any ıg that I am ashamed of.—You—you

remember I invited myself to stay here a whole month."

"Yes, and we hope you mean to keep your word."

"I do, for much depends on it. I am going to be married, and I will be married by no one but you, Mr. Derville; and in this abode of wedded happiness."

"We have had our suspicions on this subject," replied Derville; while Mrs. Derville, kissing Mrs. Arlington affectionately as she spoke, said fervently, "May you be as happy as I am!"

Mrs. Arlington then informed her anxious auditors, that Sir Henry Arlington had renewed his addresses, now made more valuable to her from years of tried constancy, and the consciousness she had how much her parents had wished the union, and that with her whole heart she had consented to be his—"and he will reach the neighbouring watering-place to-night," she added, "which is, I understand, near

igh to make it a very easy drive for
hither and back again." And this
ortant communication being made,
iappy party separated for the night.
he next morning Mary Anne, who
gone to bed before this disclosure,
informed that Mrs. Arlington was
g to be married to her relation Sir
ry Arlington, and she was exces-
y anxious to know what sort of a
ing man he was. Her mother and
r had the same curiosity; and after
had hinted at their wish, Mrs. Ar-
ton told them he was not handsome
ainly, but had the manner and look of
ntleman; "with, as I tell him," said
"the inquiring and penetrating look
diplomat;—a look I have observed
ther diplomats,—but in him, as I
k at least, it is only intelligent, and
no mixture of cunning."

Not handsome!"—cried Mary Anne,
ging fondly about Mrs. Arlington,

and speaking in a mournful tone, "not handsome!"

"No,—and I am not sure that *you* will not think him *old* and *ugly*." Mary Anne did not reply, but turned away in silence, and soon after she was heard sobbing violently.

"What is the matter, Mary Anne?" cried Mrs. Derville,—and it was a minute or two before she could sob out, "I can't bear to think that Mrs. Arlington should marry an old and ugly man!" But at length the reasonings of Mrs. Arlington and of her mother, and their common-place assurances, that wisdom and worth, and virtue and talents, were far better things in a man than personal charms, quieted Mary Anne's distress.

"Besides, I love him,—nay I am in love with him," said Mrs. Arlington smiling.

"Still I wonder you should fall in love with a man that's old and ugly," said Mary Anne; "and I do wonder to hear

ımma say, beauty is of no value in a
n, when I am sure she is quite proud
ıapa's beauty."

'But, Mary Anne, I am far more
ud of your father's virtues," replied
s. Derville; "and as I see you are not
te in a right temper of mind, we will
p this subject for the present.'

The next morning Derville walked
r to the watering-place, to call on Sir
ıry Arlington, hoping to prevail on
ı to return with him to dinner; and
Henry drove Derville, and a friend of
own who was with him, to Lovelands
ıis curricle, just time enough to dress
ore the last bell rung.

But when Mary Anne heard Sir
nry was come, it was impossible for
ly, or Jane, to persuade her to go
vn, so great was her dread of seeing
ugly lover of her dear, beautiful Mrs.
lington, and so sure was she that she
ıuld hate the sight of him. At length,

however, Jane insisted on leading her into the parlour.

As there were two strangers, Mary Anne did not know which was the dreaded Sir Henry. But she did not venture to look at either, and in an awkward, sheepish manner, wholly unusual to her, she seated herself on the corner of a chair, and began playing with her fingers.

Sir Henry now, by accident, dropped his glove, and Mrs. Derville desired Mary Anne to pick it up. She did so in such confusion, that she dropped it again; and as Sir Henry also stooped for it, their heads knocked against each other.

Mary Anne felt no pain whatever from the blow; but even if she had, she must have been pleased with the sweet and kind tone in which the stranger hoped he had not hurt her; seating himself, and gently dragging her to him as he spoke. The voice and action encouraged her so much,

ıt she looked up and assured him that
: was not hurt at all. The stranger
she did so regarded her with a smile of
asure and approbation, which made the
ıscious Mary Anne cast her eyes on
: ground; but again she turned to look
those bright eyes and that fine coun-
ıance.

" I think I can guess your name,"
ispered Sir Henry.

" Oh! no, that I am sure you cannot."

" Oh! yes, you are Mary Anne."

" Yes, to be sure you knew I was not
ne, because she is a woman, and so
u thought I must be Mary Anne; but
can't guess who *you* are; all that I
ow is, that you are not Sir Henry Ar-
gton."

" And how do you know that?"

" Oh! because, because I do know,
t I shall not tell."

" Well, if I am not he, who is?"

" Oh! that gentleman at the window,

to be sure, talking to papa!" Then looking at Sir Henry earnestly, she added, "Oh! no, I am sure *you* cannot be Sir Henry Arlington."

"What can she mean?" asked Sir Henry of the pleased Mrs. Arlington.

"Come hither, Mary Anne, and tell me in my ear, why you are so sure that cannot be Sir Henry?"

"Because," speaking in her ear, "because you told me, I might think him old and ugly looking, and that gentleman is quite handsome, and looks so good and so good-natured!"

"And it is, perhaps, because he looks so good and so good-natured, that you think him handsome; for I assure you that is Sir Henry Arlington."

"O dear! I am so glad!" cried the affectionate child, returning to Sir Henry.

"Glad of what, Mary Ann?"

"That you are really Sir Henry."

And not long after, on Sir Henry's asking

how Nelly did, Mary Ann told him there was time enough to go and see Nelly and her puppies and the rabbits before dinner; and as Sir Henry was kind enough to indulge her wish, dinner was actually on the table before Sir Henry returned, leading the delighted Mary Ann by the hand.

Sir Henry made himself equally agreeable to the mother as to the younger daughter; for he nursed the baby as well as she did, and declared that though he loved all babies, he thought hers was the loveliest that he had ever seen. It was impossible after this, that Sir Henry could have a fault in Mrs. Derville's eyes; and Derville soon learnt to value him on surer ground, on his rational piety, his highly cultivated mind, his talents, his temper, and his active virtues.

One day Mrs. Arlington took Mrs. Derville aside, and said, "A living in my gift, of at least a thousand per annum, is now vacant; and I will present your hus-

band to it, or your son, whichever you please."

"My son by all means," she replied, "I do not hesitate one moment; for indeed I have profited by your kind admonitions, and have now no wish ungratified."

"Not for yourself, perhaps, but you may have for your children; therefore Mr. Derville shall hold it for Lionel till he is old enough to take it; and if you choose to lay by the income of it, it will enable you to add considerably to your fortune at the end of three years. And Lionel may be his father's curate." This point being settled, Mrs. Arlington frankly asked Mrs. Derville, "Whether she and her husband were pained or pleased with her presumption, in having dared to show her sense of the service Mrs. Derville had done her, by a pecuniary donation to her child." And Mrs. Derville as frankly owned that they had received it as it was meant, and the other gifts too: but that the idea that the

irs, &c. came from her, had been pain-
to her.

' I will tell you why I asked," said Mrs.
ington; " I wish to give Jane money
buy clothes and furniture, but I was
aid that you might think it was taking
berty. But you see I must do something
her, as I have given Mary Ann money,
l Lionel a living. And really during
residence abroad I have not spent
f my income, and have more money,
refore, just now than I know what to
with. Do then assist me in taking
ittle off my hands."

The scruples of the Dervilles were
n silenced; and the kindness of Mrs.
lington enabled the young couple, when
ey married, to purchase all the comforts,
en comforts bordering on luxuries, which
alth only can procure. But previously
her own marriage, Jane had the honour
d happiness of being bride-maid, with
e delighted Mary Ann, to their beloved

Mrs. Arlington, who, at the simple church of Lovelands, received from the hand of the man she most *venerated,* that of the man she most *loved.*

Our heroine's second marriage took place under far happier auspices than had attended her first. No consciousness that her choice had clouded over a parent's brow with forebodings of wedded misery, now occurred to damp her bridal hopes; but on the contrary, she knew, that could her parents witness what was then passing on earth, their warmest blessings would have attended an union, likely, they would have believed, to fulfil their fondest hopes.

That union still remains blissful and unbroken, and cemented still more by the birth of two children. Lady Arlington has also the happiness of witnessing that of Emily, her husband's innocent victim, who is well and happily married to the lover mentioned some

ges back. But, as there is always some wback on human felicity, there are ies when Lady Arlington regrets with n but heartfelt bitterness, that she re-ted in early youth the substance for the idow; and, by refusing that love which w she valued as her dearest earthly asure, had not only deprived an ido-ing parent of the greatest joy he could ve known, that of witnessing the hap-iess of an only child; but had doomed n to the bitter agony of witnessing it child's misery. And while these oughts are uppermost in her mind, her ise of happiness is for a time anni-ated. But it soon revives to all its force ain; and whenever the mistress of the wn-house now meets the once envied rs. Derville, she has a pride in ex-iming, "And *I* too am a WIFE TO BE VIED."

[*In compliance with the desire of its Author, I give the following Narrative.*]

PROPOSALS OF MARRIAGE:

A TALE.

"WE know what we are; but know not what we shall be," said the poor Ophelia; and she could not have made a truer observation, as my experience tells me, had she been in her right senses,—for it never came into my head to suspect that I should turn author. And still I think it an odd fancy in me; especially as my story is a true one, and I am the real hero of it. However, narrate it I will, as my ambition now is to be a

iter; and if that ambition should go to increase, I shall probably be a blished writer too; for I think, by eans of some scribbling man or woman my acquaintance, I shall be able, if vish it, to get into print.

I shall be very careful to avoid in my vn tale whatever has distressed me in the ories of others. Therefore, though I ould on no account tell the reader my vn real name, that of my family, or of y one person alluded to, I will not lk of *Mr. D*—— or *Lady C*——, but will give each person as pretty a sound-g name as I can think of: and some-mes perhaps it will be appropriate to the aracter.

To begin then with myself.

At the time I am writing this, I am healthy man of sixty-four; and am well nown in the fashionable world as the Ionourable Tylney Trèsgothic, a very ich old bachelor, the younger son of

the Earl of Oldworth: consequently I need not tell you that I have long been the object of matrimonial speculations to virgins of ton, who have been twenty years at least expecting the right man to appear;—and to comely widows of a certain age, who have acquired the habit of living beyond their income. Whether therefore I am still a bachelor, or whether I am going to marry, will be seen during the progress of these memoirs.

But I fear that when I said above I would not do what has always annoyed me in the stories of other people, I exceeded the strict truth; for I am disappointed myself when a particular description is not given of the face, person, and dress of the hero and heroine; but I cannot summon up courage to describe my own. All I can do, however, I will. I will say that I am tall, florid, young-looking for my age, as I am told, and not by my glass alone; that my usual

tume is a bottle-green coat; that ough all the variations of fashion I e worn white silk stockings and light seymere breeches, with knee and shoe- kles; and that my hair, which has y lately been cropped close to my head, l now that it is white with age,) has ays been lightly powdered. I have ver worn a wig, except when I was a ld;—and I am hanging up at Oldworth stle, in a complete suit of light blue vet, a wig, a sword, and a hat under arm, in all the consequence of ten years l. Let me add, that, such as I have scribed myself, I am usually to be seen ery night of a favourite opera, at the rner of the third row in the pit, on the le of *la prima donna*;—that, habited a loose great coat, I may also be seen nen a favourite actor or actress plays, in e third row of the pit at Drury-lane Covent Garden;—and I will venture say, that there is scarcely a fashionable

assembly in London to which I am not invited, and where I am not commonly to be met for an hour or two.

Reader, if thou art a young man or woman of fashion, thou must have met me very often; and when thou hast read this tale, I suspect that thou wouldst not be sorry to be better acquainted with me, shouldst thou be in the situation of which it treats. But I beg thy pardon, for I feel that I am talking a great deal to little purpose, and already deserving the reproach of garrulous old age....Now then to get on with my story.

I have already said that I am a frequenter of fashionable assemblies, and they are often enlivened by fine music, from professors and public singers, or by pleasing performances, chiefly vocal, from amateurs. But these latter performers rarely exhibit except in small select parties,—and of such parties I am very fond.

n these meetings, which are favour-
to the cultivation not only of ac-
ntances but of intimacy, a friend pre-
ed me to Lady Mary Lovely, eldest
ghter of the earl and countess of
rien, who had charmed me by her
ity, her manner, and her voice; and I
id her conversation equal to them.
had also another charm for me—her
ie was *Mary*.

ady Mary was not slow to discover
favourable impression which she had
le; and she tried to increase it by the
lest smiles and most flattering atten-
. But, as I am really no coxcomb,
as not weak enough to believe that
fine young woman had any intention
being Lady Mary Trèsgothic. But
world thought otherwise; and Lord
less,—a man of my own age, but whose
was of a fine purplish brown, with
skers of the same colour; and with

cheeks *couleur de rose*, but whose knees tottered under him, and whose legs were like spindles,—was seen to turn as pale as he could turn, whenever I approached Lady Mary. For Lord Lawless was her declared lover, and highly approved of by Lord and Lady Vaurien, who had twelve children, expensive habits, an embarrassed fortune, and no principle. But with this expected sacrifice of herself to the wants of her selfish parents I was not acquainted during the first weeks of my intimacy with Lady Mary, though I soon discovered that she was unhappy; and several times I had seen her start, change colour, cast an inquiring anxious glance round the room, or through the folding doors that led from one room to the other, and then fall into complete abstraction seemingly from all external objects. At these times I used to say to myself, "Poor girl, I fear she is in love!" And I

ed to wonder, as I had often done
re, at Lady Mary's being unmarried
ıe age of three-and-twenty.
Who the object of her affections was
d yet to learn;—but I was soon ena-
to discover.
ne evening Lady Mary was in vain
ited, by the lady of the house and
elf, and *commanded* by her mo-
, to sing a little ballad in which she
icularly excelled. But she resolutely
sed to comply, urging her utter in-
ty. Our hostess and I, seeing her
sually pale and agitated, desisted
ı our suit; but Lady Vaurien said to
in a low voice, "Foolish obstinate
! I know why you cannot sing it.'
Then I wonder, madam, you should
me."
ınd the angry mother turned away,
ng her the look of a fiend; while I,
of pity, wonder, just indignation, and

affectionate curiosity, sat down by Lady Mary.

"O mother—yet no mother!" I almost audibly murmured; and I looked at my trembling neighbour with such interest expressed on my countenance, that the poor thing was soothed, though affected, and said to me in a low voice,

"You know not how precious to me the consciousness of your friendship is; for indeed, dear sir, I want a friend."

At this moment the Honourable Mr. Merital passed us; a very fine young man, who had just taken orders. As he left the room, he looked back, and his eyes met those of Lady Mary. The glance was momentary; but his expression could not be mistaken—it was that of love; and when I turned round to see what effect it had on Lady Mary, I found her countenance so cleared up! and though she looked thoughtful, she seemed no

er painfully so. In a few minutes
, she said to me, " I wish you would
the goodness to go and see whether
ur Merital be gone."
lid so ; and returning told her he
hen going down stairs. Immediate-
eeing her mother coming up to her
ı, she said to me with a very meaning
:, " I can sing now." And as Lady
ien did come to persecute her into
)liance, it was well for her that she
ıble to obey her. She then sat down
e instrument, and sung the follow-
ıong, though not with a very steady

give the words, because they were
ntly descriptive of her own feelings ;
it was cruel in her mother to request
o sing them when she knew Merital
within hearing.

SONG.

To the Tune of "Vous me quittez."

"Yes, we must part, since fate has so decreed it,
And far I'll rove, my fetter'd heart to free;
For love should die when hope no more can feed it,—
And I as yet too fondly think on thee.

Nor think that I'm in search of pleasure roving!
By thee unshared all joys are vain to me;
I go in hopes, the power of absence proving,
I, with less pain, may learn to think on thee.

Judge by thyself, whene'er the past recalling,
Thy pensive memory fondly turns to me;
Judge by thy tears, in spite of manhood falling,
What I endure whene'er I think on thee.

But Heaven forbid that thou, like me, shouldst languish!
So well I love, from selfish views so free;
I wish thee, Henry, ne'er to know such anguish,
As tears my heart whene'er I think on thee."

Vell, I had learnt three things that
ıing. The first was, to think ill of
y Vaurien;—the second, that Lady
y was not only in love, but was be-
d;—the third, that Arthur Merital
the lover; and moreover, I suspected
union had been forbidden by parental
ıority.

also recollected with no small plea-
: that Lady Mary had told me she
ed my friendship, and that she wanted
end. Still, though I had reason to
k she wished to confide in me, I did
feel myself authorized to solicit her
fidence sooner than she chose to offer
and week succeeded to week, month
ıonth; and I met Lady Mary, and I
her grow thinner and thinner, paler
paler, and evidently more and more
ressed,—yet still she was silent, and
vas I, on the subject of her apparent
asiness.

Ier approaching marriage with Lord

Lawless was now the general theme of conversation; and I heard that he had bought her of her mercenary parents, by promising to provide for three of the sons, and to take her without any dower then, or in future.

How great was my indignation at this intelligence!

I could understand the impropriety, not to call it madness, of a union between two noble beggars, like Merital and Lady Mary; but I thought it hardship enough for two such admirable young persons to be doomed to pine in hopeless love; and to force Lady Mary to marry one man while her heart was another's, appeared to me the climax of parental cruelty;—that man too, old, dissolute, and hollow-hearted;—a man who could not, I was sure, fulfil the promises by which he obtained her, as he was really not rich, and had but little interest.

While I was feeling this anxiety con-

ning Lady Mary, life, which usually
ted interest with me, acquired a very
ng one; and I was perpetually form-
plans, and abandoning them again, to
e these parted lovers, as I now found
had long been; but they had been
ed in vain, for one interchange of a
of still-existing tenderness had
erto kept the flame alive in both, and
proved that there is no cure for love,
absolute separation and complete years
bsence.

But what can be the cause," I was
saying to myself, "of the change in
y Mary? Surely she will never go to
altar willingly, and they will not
sume to drag her thither?" when,
! one evening she came to a party,
ning on the arm of Lord Lawless, who
ked all delight, and seemed to say,
m I not at last a happy man?'

Lady Mary, however, looked any
ng but happy; and I saw that she was

vainly desirous of speaking to me apart. I therefore contrived to get near her, and to say in her ear,—"Can what I hear be true? Are you really going to sacrifice yourself to that man?"

"I fear I must," she replied in the accent of a broken-hearted woman; "and sacrifice myself for the good of my family. Besides, why should I not now? Arthur Merital is going to be married—you understand me."

"*I do. Still,* pause ere you resolve."

Lady Mary sighed, but spoke not *then:* however, as she walked forward, she said to me, with a look of excessive agony, "O that Lord Lawless were such a man as yourself!"

"Would he were, for thy sake, poor thing!" thought I; supposing that Lady Mary meant she wished he was as well-principled, as in that case he would not have persisted in addresses so odious to the object of them.

scarcely slept that night, so full
I of wishes to serve Lady Mary. But
d her lover really be false, and so soon
: that look too? *I could not believe*
[knew how constant man's love could
and I suspected that Lady Mary was
osed upon by those interested in de-
ing her.

'he next morning, however, though
ıight had been nearly sleepless, I rose
ıy usual hour; and was at breakfast
alf-past nine, when my valet inform-
ıe that a young lady and her maid
: below, and wished to speak to me.

Which?" said I, "the young lady, or
maid?"

The young lady."

What! a woman grown?"

O yes, sir; quite a fine young lady
ed."

This is very strange," thought I, but
sired she might be shown up directly.

And my heart whispered that it was Lady Mary Lovely.

Nor was I deceived. It was Lady Mary; who, throwing herself nearly overwhelmed with flutter on a chair, apologized in imperfect accents for the liberty which she had taken, and the indecorum of which she was guilty.

"I am conscious," replied I, "of nothing but the happiness which you have conferred, and the hopes of your entire confidence, which your visit holds out to me, as you must be sure, Lady Mary, that I will do any thing in my power to serve you."

"Will you—will you indeed?" said the agitated girl.

"I will—that is, unless it is something very unreasonable; and that I know it cannot be."

"Do not be too sure of that."

"No! Well, slight difficulties shall

discourage me;—and now tell me whole story of your love and your ɛry."

My story," she replied, "is soon :—Arthur Merital and I have been ɛhed to each other from early youth, we were allowed to associate together, ɛhe danger which might have been seen had been incurred to the utmost; ɔr we had learnt to love, and then ıd we must as certainly despair. l we were forbidden even to speak to ı other. Nor was the distant prospect ɛh Merital had of a family living, al-ɛd to hold out to us any chance of re happiness. I will not dwell on t I felt at seeing all the prospects of youth thus destroyed; and though ɛited to accept the addresses of other ıg men, I rejected them almost with ust, as I had a sadly soothing conso-ın in my determined constancy to my love; especially as, whenever we met,

the eyes of Merital evinced a constancy equal to my own. This consciousness, too, prevented me from being unhappy. But now...." Here Lady Mary paused, too much affected to proceed for a few moments; then recovering herself, she went on:—"But now the case is widely different, and I am *miserable:* he is faithless, and *I desperate.* My parents are in distressed circumstances. Lord Lawless is liberal in his offers, my filial piety is called upon, and my love for my dear brothers....and above all, perhaps I am urged by pique and the wounded feelings of my sex, to become a wife, before Merital becomes a husband." Here she gave way to a passionate flood of tears; and though I disapproved her last-mentioned motive of action, I deeply sympathized in her very natural distress.

"Compose youself, my dear child," said I very tenderly.

"Would I were your child!" she ex-

imed, " then I might have a chance of
ng happy."

" Perhaps you still may. But you
med to imply that you had a favour to
of me."

" I have; but such a favour that I
lly dare not utter it.'

" Indeed!"

" Yes; one that nothing but the
uliar circumstances in which I am
ced, and my horror of Lord Lawless,
ld have induced me to think of. It
so strange a thing to ask—so *very*
ange."

" Keep me no longer in suspense,
ne the desire. What do you wish me
do?"

" Marry me yourself."

Here she hid her face, and I was
d she did, for I could not help ex-
iming,—" Strange indeed!"—and I
uld not have liked to see the poor
ng's confusion.

But, as soon as I had recovered my surprise and consternation, I must own that I cast a look into the pier glass opposite, and did not wonder I was preferred to Lord Lawless; but this was but a momentary weakness, and vanity was soon swallowed up in better feelings. I told Lady Mary that I was flattered by her preference, and the more so, because she knew that I had never tried to obtain it—had never had the vanity to believe that her attentions to me could be prompted by any other feelings than those of friendship.

I also added, that my affections had long been buried in the grave; and that I had always resolved never to marry. But that our views usually changed with circumstances, and that like Benedict,—"when I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live to be married;"—that therefore, if there was no other way of saving her from that hateful

ord Lawless, I would offer the same
ms as he did to her father, and I should,
loubted not, obtain her for myself, as
e was ready to marry me, though she
d not yet ever consented to accept
ord Lawless. But that I must beg a
le time to consider of her proposal:
because I must own," said I, " that in
ite of your youth, your beauty, and
ur various charms, my heart remains
onstant and a widowed heart; and I
l towards you no other sensation than
at of a parent towards a child."

Lady Mary looked pleased, and per-
ps was so. Still the sex's vanity in
r must have been a little mortified at
e excessive sang-froid with which I had
ceived such a proposal from a very fine
l: however, she did not betray morti-
ation if she felt it. And now, being
rful of exciting suspicion by her ab-
nce, she bade me a hasty " farewell,"

after overwhelming me with excuses and expressions of gratitude; and I promised that in less than two days she should hear from me, or see me.

I was truly glad to get rid of her; for my mind was now made up as to the best course for me to pursue, and the first thing I resolved upon was to go to ——'s auction-room, in hopes of seeing Arthur Merital, who used to be a frequent lounger there; from the hope, as I now suspected, of seeing Lady Mary, whose mother, though she was so poor as to think it necessary to sell her child, had always money to expend on her own selfish luxuries, and was for ever buying old china, *or moulu* vases, or things of that sort.

"If he be faithless, he will probably not be there," thought I; "if faithful, he will:" and on entering the room, he was the first object whom I saw. He was examining very attentively a beautiful

ory work-basket, and I ventured to ac-
ıst him with "That is a beautiful thing,
[r. Merital."

"Very."

"It is just the thing for a lover to
esent to his mistress; and you, per-
ıps, think so to. And if it be not im-
ertinent, I presume you are thinking of
esenting it to the young lady to whom
e world says you are soon to be married?"

This was very presumptuous, I own;
ıt poor Merital was conscious of feel-
gs which made him insensible to my
ıldness, for he remembered my inti-
acy with Lady Mary.

"I! I going to be married!—Can
e—can she think, sir!—The report is
ıolly false. It is my brother who is
ıing to be married, not I; though in his
ısence I escort his lady. I marry! I
arry! Mr. Trèsgothic, I shall never
arry now—never—never."

As he said this, he raised his fine eyes

to heaven with such a despairing look! and I read in them Lady Mary Lovely at full length.

"Oh!" thought I, "thou art a lover after my own heart;" and having now gained what I wanted, I left the room.

I lived only in the next street, so I went home to see if there were any letters for me; and I found one, the contents of which had such an effect on me, that I seemed to tread in air, and ordering my carriage round immediately, I desired it to drive me to—no matter to what street or square—but to the Lord Chancellor's. I shall not say to what Lord Chancellor's; nor, as mystery always enhances the effect of a story, will I say any thing to let my readers know in what year I am writing. I shall only say that Chancellors sometimes are men who have a pleasure in remembering favours done them when they wanted friends, and are honourably proud of proving by their

tions, that they are not ungrateful. ıch a Chancellor was he to whom I was ıstening, and I was one of his earliest ıd best friends.

It is a fine thing to live in a country ıere a man who has talents and indus- ʏ may raise himself to the highest ıours of the state ;—and my ennobled end had done so. I knew he was not ting, as term was over, so I hoped to ıd him at home, and I did.

" ——," said I as I entered (for in- ed I did venture to call him by his me), " I am come to ask a favour of u."

" I am glad of it. You have pro- ised to do me that kindness for many ars, but have never done it yet; and t who has such claims on me as you ve ?"

" Well, well, you will own that I am ıw come to demand payment of the

debt due, with *interest*, when I tell you I come to ask you to give me the living of ——."

"That living! It is not vacant yet; and though the incumbent is very old, (eighty at least,) he is very healthy."

"No; he is probably dead by this time. Here is a letter from his physician, who has written to me by to-day's post, on business of my own."

He read the letter, and found that the incumbent was literally in the agonies of death: and the moment after, he received an express to tell him he was actually dead.

"There," said I, "and remember, I am the first applicant."

"True; but it is one of the very best livings in my gift, and...."

"I am one of the very best friends in your possession."

"Very true; but one of the mini-

ers, instigated I suspect by a very eat personage, has expressed a wish to ve...."

" What he or she shall not have: and I nt this living for a person they would prove—for Arthur Merital, whose father u know always votes with government: d I want this living for him, to enable n to marry Lady Mary Lovely, Lord urien's daughter, a devoted slave to inisters: and your other asking friends n only want to give it to some one of eir adherents and favourites.'

" What shall I do? I wish, you ow, to oblige you."

" And by obliging me you will not ly make two worthy and fond hearts ppy, but you will certainly mortify and appoint your old and determined ene- y in the House, Lord Lawless; who s, you know, no mercy on you, and who suitor to Lady Mary with her selfish rents' approbation.'

I thought I was justified in holding out this temptation to his bad feelings, if he had any, that they might come in aid of his good ones. But whether they did or not, I do not pretend to say; all I know is, that he promised me the living, and that while I staid, I had the satisfaction of seeing him write one or two letters in answer to applications, saying it was already engaged.

My next visit was to Lord and Lady Vaurien. I found them alone, and in much emotion. Lady Mary had that morning, on her return home, positively declared that nothing should compel her to marry Lord Lawless.

I began thus—"I understand, my lord, that you and Lady Vaurien wish to marry Lady Mary to Lord Lawless, and that she is utterly averse to the union. Is this true? Believe me, the question is not one of mere curiosity."

Lord Vaurien answered me at once

at it was true; while his lady's cunning
tle eyes, as she fixed them on me,
inkled with indescribable shrewdness.
"Then know, my lord, I am authorized
Lady Mary to ask your leave to propose
marry her *myself*—having her free
nsent to wed, if I can win her."
"You! you!" exclaimed both the
lighted parents at once.
"Yes; and on the same terms as
ord Lawless offered. I will provide for
ur three boys; for I have, you know,
finitely more wealth than he has; and
rough my connexions, more interest."
"Oh, to be sure," cried Lady Vaurien.
Besides, we know if you make a promise
u will keep it; and that is more than
can be sure of with Lord Lawless.
ell, really, Mary has been very sly:—
saw her bent on refusing Lord Law-
s, but we did not suspect the cause
s attachment to you."
"Attachment to me!" echoed I,

looking at her with scornful indignation: "No;—you know it was *not*. But, my lord, you have not assured me of your consent."

"I assure you not only of my consent, but of my warmest approbation: and ah! what a comfort it is to think that my necessities will not have compelled the sacrifice of my child!"

"My lord," I replied very gravely, "in accepting *my* proposals, you sacrifice your child to your necessities. If I were of a proper age to marry Lady Mary, it would still be a sacrifice, for you know she loves another.'

"Dear me!" said both the parents, "we thought—we hoped...."

"No, Lady Lawless," said I, "you *know*, that you *knew* the contrary; you knew Lady Mary's heart was still Arthur Merital's, and yet you urged her to marry—and marry such a man too!"

"I certainly much prefer you, Mr.

Trèsgothic, and really cannot allow such a marriage to be a hardship."

"Then I am sorry for you, madam. I pity any woman who can think a marriage of mere interest is any thing better than legal prostitution. But I must beg your patient attention, while I relate to you what it is necessary for you to know, in order to excuse the liberty which I am going to take."

They promised me their attention, and ordered the servants to deny them to every one;—but there is nothing they would not have promised me at that moment; for I had many thousands a-year—and I was to be their son-in-law, I am now going to appear, what I have some pretensions to be—a *heros de roman*—and you are now going to hear the history of my life. But I did wish to tell it to more respectable auditors than Lord and Lady Vaurien, and more interested too:—for though the husband did appear

to hear every word, I soon found that the wife's eyes were riveted on a beautiful emerald heart that I wore on my watch-chain, which dangled in my hand, and I had no doubt that she was saying to herself, "I wonder whether he will give that to Mary, and whether Mary would give it to me!"....But I am too prolix—Now then to begin.

"Perhaps you already know," said I, "that my grandmother's immense fortune—a city fortune—was, according to the marriage-settlement, settled on the second son of my father, being intended, no doubt, to purchase another peerage for the family. You also know that by the death of the first and second son I became the second son and heir to the fortune, of which, alas! I gained possession when it had ceased to have any charms for me, and when it could excite in me at first no feelings but the bitterness of unavailing regret."

"Did you not immediately try to procure a peerage?" asked Lady Vaurien eagerly.

"No, madam: the only woman whom I could ever wish to decorate with a coronet was become the wife of another. For her sake I might have sought distinctions:—but with my hope my ambition died also. I had loved, passionately loved, Lady Vaurien, and been beloved in return. But I was then only the third son of Lord Oldworth, and my mistress was rich. Accordingly my suit was rejected:—but I was sure of my own constancy, and equally so of my mistress's, and I resolved to await patiently the chances of life, hoping that something might turn up in our favour. But in less than a twelvemonth after I had been refused by her father, she married my rival, a man of large fortune. I cannot, dare not dwell on the phrensied agonies which this event occasioned me. Yes;

let me think it was phrensy that prompted me to do what I did. I copied out part of the song of 'Thou art gone awa' from me, Mary,' slightly altering the lines to suit my situation :—they are as follows :—

Until this hour I never thought
That aught could alter thee, Mary!
Thou'rt still the mistress of my heart,
Think what thou wilt of me, Mary!

Though thou'st been false, yet while I live
I'll still wish well to thee, Mary!
I can't forget, but I forgive,
The wrong thou hast done to me, Mary!

"This was a song she used to sing with great feeling, and she often expressed her wonder at the falsehood which occasioned it. Having finished the extract, I watched for her carriage one day in Bond-street; and as she got out of it I forced it into her hand without speaking. I then gazed my last on her;

for she looked so beautiful, though very pale, that I dared not see her again; and I instantly went abroad:—but not alone; my kind mother went with me; and to her soothings, and her watchful tenderness I owed the recovery of my health and of my mind. It was now that I became possessed of my grandmother's fortune:—but it came too late—and I fear that I, at first, received it unthankfully.

"I remained abroad some years after my mother left me: but on my father's death I thought it right to return to England to try to console her, as she had consoled me; and from her I learnt that my faithless Mary's husband had spent all her fortune and his own; that she was in reduced circumstances; and that he was living abroad. She then was poor, while I was rich!—and call it weakness if you please, but I could not endure the idea, ill as she had used me, that she

should want aught which money could purchase; and I grieved to think that I could not befriend her.

"My mother, on my father's death, shut herself up at her country-seat, which was within ten miles of Clifton; I therefore usually rode thither every morning, by way of change of scene. One morning I followed by chance a shabbily dressed invalid, leaning on her maid, who seemed to walk with difficulty; when as she reached a pastry-cook's shop, she turned her head, saw me, uttered a sort of exclamation, and fainted away. I caught her in my arms, and carried her into the shop. But judge of my feelings when I found that it was my once-loved Mary! Her insensibility was short: and when she recovered, I remembered nothing at that moment but that she was ill, and that she had fainted at sight of me. But such meetings and such feelings, though they can never be forgotten,

had better not be described. Suffice that I insisted on supporting her home—And it was such a home!—shabby, dark, unwholesome—and I entreated to be allowed to see her the next day. She did not say No, and I fancied that she meant to say Yes. I therefore called, but she refused to see me. I called again—but she was still denied.

At length I heard she was considerably worse, and was in the greatest danger; and I called every day, and almost every hour, to inquire how she did. One day when I called, the servant gave me a letter addressed to me; and changed as the characters were, with a beating heart I recognised the precious handwriting of Mary.

I instantly flew to my hotel with phrensied impetuosity, and locking myself into a room, I read—

"I feel that I am dying; and as death

they say dissolves all ties and all obligations, but such as affection sanctions and God approves, I trust that I may venture to disclose the secrets of my heart; and as death endues me with this privilege, I welcome its approach. Know then, that I have always loved, and never loved any other than you. But I was taught to believe that you were false, and engaged to another. Nay, they even caused your marriage to be inserted in the paper. But even that failed—and I declared your faithlessness was no excuse for mine.

"The next attempt they made was a terrible one!—My father declared, if I did not marry Mr. Desmond, he must destroy himself: that he owed him a great sum of money, which he could discharge no other way than by giving him my hand. I refused to believe this at first; but he brought me documents to prove it; and lastly, he produced the pistol, and aimed it at his life.

" This is no new tale—no new inci-
ıt—such things have been tried on
ıers. With me the plan succeeded,
l I married;—married without one
rd of apology or excuse to you: and yet
new myself excusable. Judge then
at I felt, when you put those touching
ıerous lines in my hand—lines too
ich reminded me of former days. My
t impulse was to write to you, and
ulpate myself: but my second was
repress the culpable, ungenerous, and
ıgerous design. 'No,' said I to my-
, ' if he still believes me unworthy,
may forget me and be happy. But
e knows me to be aggrieved, and not
lty, he will love me still, and perhaps
k me still:—and then how can I be
e that I shall be able to resist the
ıdings of my own heart!'

' The first virtue is to avoid tempta-
ı;—and I, acting on this principle,
ɔore to write to you. O my beloved

Tilney! may I not now rejoice humbly over the consciousness of having done thus—of having distrusted my own strength—since I owe perhaps to that, the support and comfort which I now feel on this, my bed of death!

"I have only to add, that my husband, conscious that I never loved him, and suspecting that I still loved you, treated me with excessive unkindness; and that I even rejoiced in the utter destruction of our fortune, because it ridded me of him. I had been gradually dying of what is called a broken heart before he left me—and the struggle is nearly over.

"I have now unburthened my heart, and it will be some comfort to me in my last moments, to know that you will love, not hate my memory:—but it is also necessary for my peace, that you should respect my reputation. Alone and unprotected I cannot, must not receive your visits, even if I were able; and I

now you would yourself shrink from being the means of aspersing my hitherto unblemished fame. We have therefore met for the last time: but I saw by your manner that you had forgiven my fault, even before you heard my exculpation, and the remembrance will, even to my last breath, be sweet to my soul.

"God bless you, dearest of men! Surely, surely, the hope that we shall meet again, in another world, is not, cannot be delusion.

"MARY."

Reader, I did not repeat this letter to my noble auditors; I only told them the heads of it; that was enough for them:—but I did tell them how I acted in consequence of it. I mounted my horse, and set off instantly to my mother, and put the letter, without speaking, into her hand.

She read it with tears, and said, "What would you have me do?"

"What your heart dictates."

"I understand you," she replied. Then writing a few lines, she ordered the carriage.

"Lord Vaurien," said I after a pause, "you remember my mother?"

"Remember her! I should be ashamed if I did not remember a woman who was an honour and an ornament to her sex! Oh, how proud have I and other young men felt, when allowed to see her to her carriage! and we seemed to respect ourselves for being able to feel pleasure in showing our respect to virtues like hers."

"I thank you, my lord," replied I with deep emotion at this just and well-felt tribute to the worth of my incomparable mother. "Well then, Lord Vaurien, this spotless and generally revered being undertook the care of my poor Mary; and as soon as we reached Clifton, she sent up the note which she had written to

her, to prepare her for a visit from her. Mary, gratified beyond measure at this, the greatest proof which I could give her of my pardon and my respect, received her according to our utmost wishes, and complied with all my mother desired.

That evening, wrapped up in blankets, and supported by pillows, she was conveyed to the best lodging in the place, and one very near the Well. There my mother remained with her, taking on her the office of head nurse; and as it was impossible that calumny itself could censure the woman protected by Lady Oldworth, Mary consented to see me once or twice a week in my mother's presence; and she was evidently improved in strength, when the news reached us that her husband was dead.

"What prospects of happiness now opened upon me! How rapidly did Mary's health seem to return with hope and happiness! while my beloved mother

enjoyed the bright prospects of her dear charge and of her son.

"But one day, when Mary had seemed unusually well, difficulty of breathing suddenly returned, and even while she was echoing my words, 'How happy we shall be after all our sufferings!' she suddenly became chilled and convulsed, and died without a groan."

Here I went into the inner apartment for a moment, to indulge unseen an emotion, which I believed was wholly unshared. But I suspect I wronged Lord Vaurien, as he had betrayed once or twice some corresponding feelings; and I was very apt to believe he sympathized with me, and had never loved Lady Vaurien.

"Now, my lord," said I, when I returned, "I am come to that part of my story which will explain and account for my having troubled you with these long details.

"Perhaps I felt this blow more, be-

cause I had learnt to hope: but I had so long despaired, and made up my mind to the utter blight of my affections, that I was not depressed as much as might have been expected. Besides, I had the consolation of knowing that my wealth had contributed all that wealth could do to the comfort of the beloved being whom I had lost;—that my own mother had been her nurse, her support, and her soother in her last illness and last moments: and above all, I knew those last moments were such as to give me every security that she was now happy. Still I had all my wonted fantasticality of feeling and plans when distressed, and my mother wisely indulged me in it.—But I see Lady Vaurien looks weary and impatient."

"Oh dear, no: I am quite interested. Pray go on as long as you please."

"One of these plans was this:—In order to save one if not more virtuous couple from being sacrificed in future to

the selfish designs of parents on their children; to prevent such misery as my beloved Mary had experienced from a marriage in which the heart had no share, I laid by a certain sum of money, which I resolved to give to the first young couple who should be unable, from poverty, to marry for inclination; and who should also be exposed, by the avarice of their parents, to the danger of forming an union odious to themselves, and hateful in the sight of God.

"The sum has now been appropriated, but not called for during so many years, that it is now a very considerable one, and large enough to portion off more than one bride; and I consider the money deposited for that purpose, as my best tribute to the memory and the misfortunes of my only love. Hear me then, Lord and Lady Vaurien: I repeat to you my solemn promise to provide for three of your boys: but I do not aspire to be the

husband of Lady Mary. No, my lord, let her marry the man of her choice, and I will give her a sufficient dower."

"With all my heart!" cried Lord Vaurien eagerly.

But Lady Vaurien said, "But, sir, Mr. Merital has nothing!"

"He has Lady Mary's heart, madam; and I am told that he has virtues and talents."

"Yes, sir, but people cannot live on them; and Mary has been expensively brought up."

"Well, madam, Mr. Merital will, to my certain knowledge, be inducted in a few days to a living worth at least from twelve to fifteen hundred pounds per annum. Will that satisfy you?"

"O yes!—and if you will not really marry Mary yourself....!"

"I marry her, madam, after what I know! Do you think me a villain? O fie! Lady Vaurien, I blush for you."

"And so do I," said her lord; "and I rejoice most heartily in the dear girl's happy prospects. And how, sir, shall we show our gratitude to you?"

"By not naming it. Yes, you can oblige me by simply telling Lady Mary I have made my proposals, and that they are accepted; and leave me to disclose the truth to her."

They promised: and as Lady Mary's accepted lover I was to return to dinner.

Certainly this was the happiest day in my life. I was sure of having been the means to crown the wishes of two faithful and fond hearts; and I felt that I had not lived in vain.

My next step was to call on Mr. Merital: but, lest I should not find him at home, I wrote him a letter, explaining all that had passed, and engaging him to come that evening to Lord Vaurien's, nd send for me out. But I found him

at home. However, as I now found an unusual lack of words come over me, I went in with the letter in my hand. I dare say my look was very extraordinary; for he seemed not only surprised, but agitated at this expected visit. And he was so alarmed and confused that he did not even ask me to sit down.

"Well, sir," said I, rendered awkward by a situation so new and so embarrassing; "so you told me you were not going to be married; but I thought you were mistaken."

"How, sir! do you doubt my word?" cried he, looking so fierce that I believe he forgot he had taken orders.

"No, sir; not at all: still I am sure you are on the point of marriage."

"Absurd! I thought, sir, you must know—you must suspect...."

"I do know, and I do suspect; but I also know beyond suspicion, that you are

going to be married,—and to Lady Mary Lovely."

"Sir!" cried Merital, turning pale; "this cruel insult—this mockery—this trifling with my feelings, is what I did not expect from you, sir."

"You are right," cried I; "it does seem like mockery, and I am an old fool; —but on my word, I cannot act more coherently now, I am so overjoyed;—but read that, and then perhaps you will forgive me."

So saying, I put the letter which I had written into his hand. Happy young man! how I envied him his feelings, and how fondly I remembered, how bitterly I regretted my poor Mary!

Before he had read to the end, he exclaimed,—"This is too much, O sir!" And rushing into the other room, he closed the door on him; and it was some minutes before he returned, and seizing

my hand, said, "What can I say to you, sir? How can I express my gratitude?"

"You owe me none. I have given Lady Mary to you, only to get rid of her myself."

"How, sir?"

"It is very true; she would have insisted on my marrying her, if you had not. She absolutely offered herself to me, to get rid of Lord Lawless; therefore in self-defence I contrived to secure her marriage with you."

"You are joking, sir."

"No, I am not; I am in earnest. She thought you faithless; and wishing to marry, to avoid persecution and get from home, she wished to marry me instead of Lord Lawless."

"That I do not wonder at, sir; but I had rather she had married Lord Lawless, because *you* she might have learnt to love."

Here was a compliment! And how well, in a few words, had this young man acquitted all his obligations to me!

"I thank you," said I; "but I must not stay here,—come to me to-night, at Lord Vaurien's,—and leave the rest to me."

I then drove home; tried to recruit in solitude, and meditation, my disordered spirits; and having dressed, I repaired to Lord Vaurien's to dinner.

But what a chill to my warm feelings awaited me there! Lady Mary seemed now as averse to me, as to Lord Lawless, and to shrink as much from a union with me. I felt I had not deserved this, and was angry at it; and to punish her a little, and prepare her at the same time, I said, as I handed her down stairs,—"So, Mr. Merital is not going to be married?"

"So my sister tells me," she replied:

And then, poor thing, her coldness was accounted for.

Still I did not think Lady Mary used me well, as I did not provoke such coldness from her by any undue exhibition of fondness; and I blamed her perhaps too severely. Nor would I after this at all shorten the period of her trial and her suffering.

At nine I was told that a gentleman desired to see me; and going up to Lady Mary, I told her that as Lord and Lady Vaurien had agreed to my proposals, they and I both thought that the marriage had better take place as soon as possible.

Lady Mary now turned very pale, and replied in faltering accents, "that she saw no occasion for such haste; that some months hence indeed...."

"Some months! Unkind Lady Mary! Do you consider my age? But perhaps

you wish to take the chances of what a few months may do for me."

Lady Mary was shocked; and conscious she was acting ungratefully, replied, scarcely able to refrain from tears, "Well, sir, in a few weeks be it then."

"I hoped you would say days," replied I; and so said her father and mother: but Lady Mary was firm. I then said, a gentleman was waiting below whom I wished to introduce that evening, because I had resolved that he should perform the marriage ceremony; and that he should not be to present when the day came; and I added smiling, that if *he* was not allowed to be one of the principal people on the occasion, there should not, with my consent, be a marriage at all.

Lord and Lady Vaurien smiled, and understood me; but Lady Mary was too unhappy to notice much what I said. All

he heard was, that I was going to introduce the gentleman who was to perform the marriage ceremony; and the idea of that was insupportable.

I now quitted the room, and returned with Merital. At sight of her lover Lady Mary screamed, started forward, and then fainted in her father's arms; and I began to be sensible I had behaved very foolishly, and sported with feelings that deserved more consideration. But Lady Mary soon recovered, and recovered to an almost insupportable sense of happiness; for all was soon explained to her; and the sight of the happiness which I had occasioned was balm of the most precious kind to my widowed heart.

To be brief. Lady Mary in a *few days* agreed to marry Merital, though she refused to marry me earlier than a *few weeks*; and thus she utterly knocked down the fabric of vanity in me which she had built up; and she continues to

look, and to be so happy in her marriage, that I have in vain expected her to smooth down the ruffled plumes of my self-love, by saying,—"Oh! Mr. Trèsgothic, that you would but have married me yourself!"

T. T.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

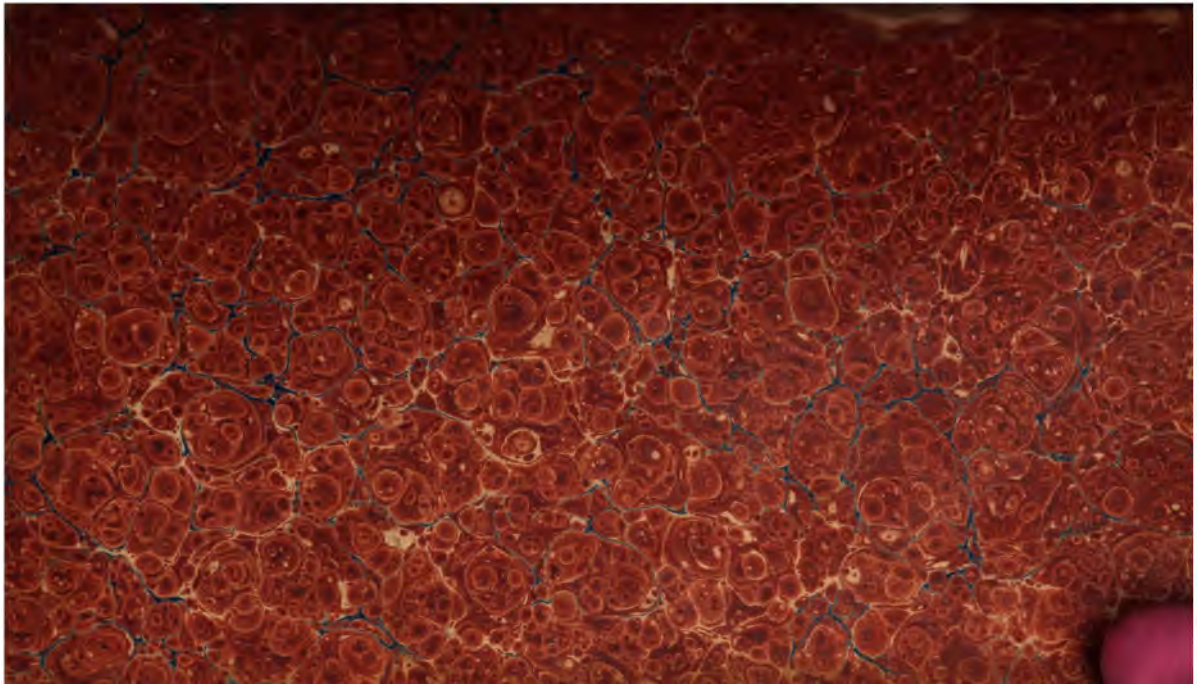
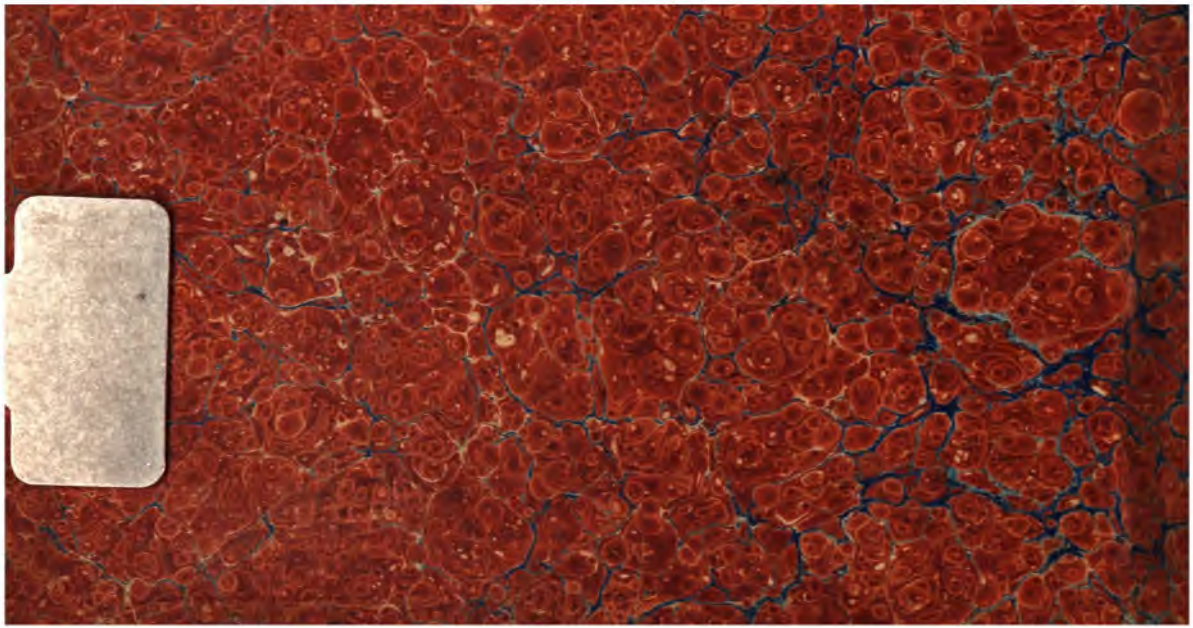
R. and A. Taylor, Printers, London.

ERRATA.

Vol. I.

ge 17, line 3 and 4, for "and his complexion *ruddier*," ·ead "and his complexion *is more ruddy*;"—for "and person manly" read "and person *are* manly."

ge 158, line 4, for "seven" read "fourteen."

Vol. IV.

ge 200, line 6, for "Ghent" read "Ratisbon."